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THIRD REPORT
OF
THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,
ON
THE POST OFFICE.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



LONDON:
PRINTED BY GEORGE E. EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1857.

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THIRD REPORT.

To the Right Honourable the LORDS COMMISSIONERS
of HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY.

MY LORDS,

I HAVE the honour to present to your Lordships the
Third Annual Report on the Post Office; being that for
the year 1856.

Extension of Inland Service.

Last year the number of Post Offices in the United Kingdom was increased by 368, making the whole present number 10,866. Of these 845 are Head Post Offices, and 10,021 Sub-Post Offices. Number of Post Offices.

A new Post Office has been completed at Glasgow, a new Office provided at Leith, and increased public accommodation afforded at the Offices at Birmingham, Devonport, and elsewhere. New Post Offices.

The revision of the posts in the rural districts, including an additional force of letter carriers, has now been nearly completed; and it appears by accounts kept since the commencement of the revision (1851), that at an annual expense of about 42,000*l.*, provision has been made for a free delivery of more than 300,000 letters per week (not to speak of newspapers and books), which formerly could be obtained only by application at the office window. Rural Posts. Free delivery.

The number of places at which free deliveries were established for the first time last year was 1,038; and at 281 other places, including Dublin and its neighbourhood, the free delivery was extended and otherwise improved.

Pillar letter boxes having been found very acceptable to the public, their number has been considerably increased; though for a time the supply was suspended while experiments were making with a view to improve their construction. These experiments have been successful; and in a Pillar Letter Boxes.

short time a large additional number of pillar letter boxes will be put up in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, and in various parts of the country.

London delivery.

The measures described in the last Annual Report as in course of adoption for accelerating the delivery of letters in London have, to a considerable extent, been carried into effect. One of the most important, viz., the first sorting of the country letters before they reach town, has proved highly successful; about 110,000 each day, or considerably more than one half of the whole number, being now sorted for the London districts in provincial offices.

In consequence of the London office being thus relieved of a portion of its work, and enabled to dispose of the remainder with increased facility, the letter carriers are dispatched for the morning delivery much earlier than formerly; whilst, owing to other and additional improvements, a still larger gain is obtained in the time of completing the delivery.

In the Appendix, page 35, is a Table, from which it will be seen that, comparing the first six weeks of the present year with the first six weeks of 1856, the morning delivery on the average is now 33 minutes earlier in its commencement, and 45 minutes earlier in its completion.

Either in the provincial or travelling Offices the remainder of the first sorting for the morning delivery will, I expect, soon be made in the same way; to the further relief of the office in London.

Postmasters and their assistants have been instructed in this duty by London sorters, and in general all parties have shown zeal and diligence in carrying out the arrangement.

Postal Districts.

Public co-operation in adding district initials to the letters has been readily accorded. Already about 55,000 letters daily, or one-third of those posted within the London Districts, are so addressed; as are also a large number of letters from the country, though not in so great a proportion.

A cheap book, giving information as to the principal streets and places included in the several districts, has been published, and a superior edition with maps is in preparation.

Owing to the great difficulty of finding suitable places for District Offices, the arrangements for expediting the transmission and delivery of district letters have not made equal progress with those affecting General Post letters. In most of the districts, however, buildings, or sites for buildings, have now been obtained.

The advantage of an earlier morning delivery has not been confined to London proper, but has extended to the immediate suburbs, and in a still greater degree to several places in the country parts of the district. Thus, the General Post letters are now received an hour earlier than formerly at Beckenham, Bromley, Croydon, Enfield, Holloway, Norwood, Peckham, and Woolwich; and half an hour earlier at Brixton, Putney, South End, Twickenham, and Walthamstow.

Suburban
delivery.

In striking contrast with the present quick transmission of letters, it may be mentioned that, as late as the year 1842, a letter posted at any London receiving house after two in the afternoon was not delivered at *Islington* till the next morning.

No improvement has yet been made in the street nomenclature of London; but I hope that the Metropolitan Board of Works, with whom the matter rests, will soon be able to decide on the measures to be adopted. So long as the present endless repetition of names continues, it will be impossible to prevent delays and mistakes in postal delivery.

Street nomen-
clature.

It is thought by some persons that no alteration is necessary; since at present every street, even where there are several of the same name, can be fully designated; as, for example, King Street, Cheapside, and King Street, Covent Garden. But the necessity for such distinction is frequently unknown, especially by persons living at a distance, and, in fact, it is in numerous instances disregarded.

Not only should the names of no two streets be identical, but the distinction between them should be broad and clear. Repeated complaints have been made in the neighbourhood of Westbourne Terrace on account of delays in delivery arising from the great similarity in several of the names thereabout, such as Westbourne Park Cottages, Westbourne Park Crescent, Westbourne Park Place, Westbourne Park Road, Westbourne Park Terrace, and Westbourne Park Villas.

During the last year 52 additional towns were provided with Day Mails to or from the metropolis of one or other of the three parts of the Kingdom; and some of the towns with Mails in both directions. These Mails have also given more frequent postal communication between many provincial towns.

Day Mails.

By using the extended portion of the South Wales Railway beyond Haverfordwest, the Night Mail between London and certain parts of South Wales, including Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock, has been accelerated; as has

Acceleration
of Mails.

also the North Mail to and from the same district of South Wales.

An earlier arrival of the London Mail has also been effected at Wick, Thurso, and other places in the north of Scotland; although the benefit has hitherto been considerably impaired by irregularities on the railway, owing to the excessive length of the trains in the chief seasons for travelling.

Improvement has also been made in the post between England and the south-east of Scotland.

Various other Mails in different parts of the United Kingdom have been accelerated.

Orkney Islands.

The improvement in the Orkney service mentioned in the last Report has been carried into effect, and additional communication established with some of the Western Islands.

Clyde.

Arrangements have been completed for affording better postal accommodation to the towns on the Clyde.

Later time for posting.

In addition to these improvements, letters can now be posted at several towns up to a later hour than formerly; and I hope to extend this improvement to other places where the hour is still inconveniently early.

Parcel Posts.

A Parcel Post service on the Great Northern Railway, which had afforded much accommodation to towns on that line, but which was suspended about a year ago in consequence of certain measures taken by the Directors (owing to a difference of opinion in other matters having arisen between the Post Office and the Company), was, last August renewed, the Directors having consented to place the arrangement on its former footing.

A similar arrangement, (though at present on a small scale,) for conveying Mail Bags at parcel rates, has been made with the Brighton, South-Eastern, and North-Eastern Companies; and I should have pleasure in extending the arrangement to other Companies in all cases where the amount of correspondence would warrant the expense.

Mails can seldom be so frequent as Railway trains.

When it is considered how numerous, frequently, are the trains between town and town, in comparison with those which convey Mail Bags, it may appear at first sight that, provided reasonable terms could be made with a Railway Company, postal communication might often, at a small cost, be largely increased; and this idea leads to applications which I am frequently compelled to refuse. It would be of little avail that Mail Bags were sent unless provision were made, on the arrival of the bags, for the delivery of the letters; and such delivery, extending as it

frequently would over a large district as compared with the number of letters, would in many cases entail an expense altogether disproportionate to the amount of correspondence.

In my last Report, when speaking of the irregularities in the conveyance of the important Mails between London and the north of England, Ireland, and Scotland, I stated that, other measures having failed to secure greater punctuality, the Department had renewed the proposal either that the Night Mail train should be run special, or that the number of carriages in the train should be strictly limited; and I expressed a hope that this improvement (for which a fair remuneration would be given) would shortly be brought into operation. In this hope, however, I have been disappointed, two of the principal companies concerned having hitherto declined to meet the views of the Department on this important point. I regret that the existing state of the law does not enable me to insist on a measure which seems to me so essential, on certain main lines, for securing punctuality.

Want of punctuality of Mail trains.

In contrast with the great irregularities on several of the railways, causing trouble to the Department, and annoyance and disappointment to the public, it is satisfactory to refer to the high degree of punctuality attained on the North British Railway, under the operation of the plan of increased remuneration for regularity and of mutual penalties for irregularity mentioned in the two previous Reports, but which all the companies to whom the plan was proposed have, with this single exception, declined.

Great punctuality of North British Railway.

The arrangement, which at present extends to the Night Mails only, came into operation on 1st July last; and it appears that, whereas in the previous half year there were 112 cases of irregularity (in 368 trips), there were in the succeeding half year only 9 such cases.

At the end of each quarter the company received an additional payment of £200, being the maximum sum of which the arrangement admitted.

It is right, however, to state that, as on this line of railway the Mail trains run at the comparatively low speed of $25\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour (including stoppages), regularity is easier than on many other lines.

By an extended use of the travelling Post Offices, much sorting of letters, which used to be done on the arrival of the mails, is now accomplished previously; an arrangement which has led to a simplification of business at many of the smaller offices.

Travelling Post Offices.

Conveyance of:
Mails.

Exclusive of conveyance by steam vessels and boats, and not counting the walks of letter-carriers or rural messengers, or the carriage of the mails from Post Offices to railway stations, the whole distance over which mails are now conveyed within the United Kingdom is upwards of 61,000 miles per day; being about 2,600 miles more than at the end of 1855. This increase is principally in railway conveyance; but it will be seen that more than half the duty is still performed by coaches and mail carts.

	Mails conveyed by Railways.				Mails conveyed by Coaches, Omnibuses, Mail Carts, &c.			
	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Number of Miles per Week Day.	Average Charge per Mile.	Maximum.	Minimum.
ENGLAND - -	22,285	s. d. 0 8½	s. d. 4 10	d. 1½	19,298	s. d. 0 2½	s. d. 0 10½	{ Exemption from Tolls. d. ½
IRELAND - -	2,766	1 4	4 6	½	8,538	0 2	0 8	½
SCOTLAND - -	3,641	0 10 1½	3 2	½	4,885	0 3	0 7	½
UNITED KINGDOM	28,692	0 9½	4 10	1½	32,721	0 2½	0 10½	{ Exemption from Tolls.

Book Post.

The privilege of the Book Post has been extended so as to include printed letters equally with other printed matter.

Number of Letters, Newspapers, and Books.

Number of Letters.

The following Table shows the number of letters delivered in the United Kingdom during the last year, with the rate of increase, and the proportion of letters to population.*

	Number of Letters in 1856.	Increase per Cent. on Number in 1855.	Proportion of Letters to Population.
ENGLAND - - - -	388 millions	About 5½	About 20 to each Person.†
IRELAND - - - -	42 "	" ½	" 7 "
SCOTLAND - - - -	48 "	" 4½	" 16 "
UNITED KINGDOM - -	478 "	" 4½	" 17 "

* This Table is to some extent an estimate, being the result of a calculation founded on a record of the actual number of letters delivered in one week of each month in the year. At page 36 in the Appendix will be found a statement of the number of letters in each year since 1838.

† In London the proportion is as high as about 40 letters to each person.

As compared with last year this number shows an increase of upwards of 22 millions ; and, as compared with the year previous to the introduction of the Penny Postage (1839), an increase (omitting franks), of 402 millions, or more than six-fold.

During the last five years the rate of increase in letters, as compared in each case with the number in the preceding year, has been as follows :—

1852	-	-	-	-	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	per cent.
1853	-	-	-	-	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	„
1854	-	-	-	-	8	„
1855	-	-	-	-	2 $\frac{3}{4}$	„
1856	-	-	-	-	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	„
Average nearly					6	„

Of the whole number of letters, nearly a quarter are delivered in London and the suburban district ; and, counting those also which are dispatched, nearly half the letters pass through the London Office.

Letters in
London.

The numbers of letters given in the foregoing statements include such colonial and foreign letters as are delivered in the United Kingdom, as well as inland letters. The great bulk, however, are inland ; the colonial and foreign letters forming not more than about one-fiftieth of the whole number delivered.

Colonial and
Foreign letters.

The increase in the correspondence with India, consequent on the reduction of postage from 1s. to 6d. made in the beginning of the year, is already equal to more than one-third of the whole ; the increase being from about 800,000 letters to nearly 1,100,000.

India.

There has been a further increase of more than 200,000 letters in the correspondence between the United Kingdom and France, making, with the increase of 800,000 last year (the first after the late reduction in the postage), a total increase of upwards of 1,000,000, or about one-third of the whole former number.

France.

When the postage for paid and unpaid letters between the two countries was the same, about two-thirds of the letters were posted unpaid, but now the proportion of unpaid letters is less than one-fifth.

There has been an increase of about 125,000 letters in the correspondence with the United States ; but the number is still considerably less than it was before the interruption to

United States.

the packet service caused by the exigencies of the late war.

Newspapers
and Books sent
abroad.

At page 37 in the Appendix will be found an estimate of the number of letters, newspapers, and books passing between the United Kingdom and many colonies and foreign countries.

Whole number
of Newspapers
passing through
Post Office.

The number of newspapers of all kinds which passed through the Post Office last year is estimated at 71,000,000; about three-quarters of which bore the impressed or newspaper stamp, the others having been franked by postage stamps.

Returned
Letters.

The number of letters returned to the writers last year, owing to failure in the attempts to deliver them, was nearly the same as in the previous year, viz., about 2,400,000, or about 1 in 200 of the whole number of letters posted.

Returned
Newspapers.

Owing to the same cause, about 550,000 newspapers also were undelivered; being about 1 in 129 of the whole number.

By recent arrangements, returned letters are sent back to the writers much more quickly than formerly; every such letter (except those from abroad), being now opened, re-directed, and re-posted on the day of its arrival at the Returned Letter Office.

Weight of
Letters.

Excluding official packets, the average weight of an inland letter is now between a quarter and a third of an ounce; that of a colonial letter rather more than a third of an ounce; and that of a foreign letter rather more than a quarter of an ounce.

Average
postage.

The average postage of an inland letter (exclusive of official letters) is about $1\frac{1}{8}d$.

Weight of
Newspapers.

The average weight of the newspapers which pass through the Post Office is rather less than last year, being now about two ounces and three-quarters. This is probably owing to an increase in the number of cheap and small newspapers.

Book Packets.

The number of book packets posted last year, exclusive of newspapers, is estimated at nearly 3,000,000.

The average weight of a book packet is about five ounces.

Money Orders.

Money Order
Offices.

During the last year 160 new Money Order Offices were opened, viz.—135 in England and Wales, 15 in Scotland, and 10 in Ireland. Of those opened in England, 57 are within the London district, but the majority in each part of

the realm were established for the convenience of the rural population.

The whole number of Money Order Offices in the United Kingdom is now 2,095.

The following Tables show the number of Money Orders issued during the year, with other particulars.*

Number of Money Orders, &c.

—	Number of Money Orders issued.	Amount.	Increase per Cent.	Com-mission.	Profit after deducting Expenses.	Proportion of Money Orders issued to Population.
		£		£	£	
ENGLAND and WALES	5,231,736	10,099,366	7½	86,861	22,231	1 to every 4 persons
IRELAND - -	461,723	806,942	7	8,376	Loss 591	1 " 13 "
SCOTLAND - -	485,523	899,253	5½	8,158	1,034	1 " 6 "
UNITED KINGDOM -	6,178,982	11,805,562	7½	103,395	22,674	1 " 4½ "

ANNUAL INCREASE in the Total Amount for which Money Orders were issued in the last five years, as compared in each case with the Amount in the year preceding.

Year.	ENGLAND and WALES.	IRELAND.	SCOTLAND. .	UNITED KINGDOM.
1852	About 7½	About ½	About 1½	About 6½
1853	" 5½	" 1	" 4½	" 5½
1854	" 5½	" 4½	" 8½	" 5½
1855	" 5	" 9	" 4½	" 5½
1856	" 7½	" 7	" 5½	" 7½
Average } increase	6	4½	4½	Nearly 6

Total Profit or Loss in each of the last ten years:—

Profit or loss.

	Profit.	Loss.
	£	£
1847	- - -	- 10,600
1848	- - -	- 5,745
1849	- 322	
1850	- 3,236	
1851	- 7,437	
1852	- 10,689	
1853	- 14,149	
1854	- 16,167	
1855	- 20,252	
1856	- 22,674	

* At pages 38 and 39 in the Appendix is a statement of the Money Orders issued and paid in each year since 1839.

It is worthy of remark, that, considerable as is the profit now yielded by the Money Order Office, it is derived solely from Money Orders of above 2*l.* each, although these orders form the minority. The orders below that amount afford no profit, and are even attended with some loss; the commission charged not being sufficient to pay the expenses.

Increase in
Money Order
business.
Increased
facilities.

The increase in the Money Order business last year was greater than in any preceding year; a fact attributable, no doubt, to the large addition to the number of offices, and to further relaxations in the regulations regarding the issue and payment of Money Orders. With respect to these relaxations, it is very satisfactory to find that, while they have saved much trouble both to the public and to the department, they do not appear, in a single instance, to have given rise to fraud, or even to fraudulent attempt.

Ireland.

A steady increase has taken place in the number of Irish issues on England; indicating increased prosperity in Ireland. Although the decrease in the number of English issues on Ireland which took place in the years 1854 and 1855 continued during 1856, yet the *total amount* remitted in 1856 was only 400*l.* less than in 1853. The average of an English order, on Ireland in 1853 was 1*l.* 6*s.* 11*d.*, but in 1856 it had risen to 1*l.* 11*s.* 7*d.*

Scotland.

In the Scottish issues on England last year there was an increase of nearly six per cent., while the English issues on Scotland increased 14 per cent.; affording evidence of increased commercial intercourse between the two countries.

Number of
Money Orders
at principal
towns.

At page 40 in the Appendix will be seen the amount of Money Orders issued and paid at many of the principal towns in the United Kingdom last year.

Army Money
Order Offices.

The extension, at the beginning of last year, of the Money Order system to the several stations of Constantinople, Scutari, and Balacava, thereby affording a ready means to our soldiers and seamen of transmitting to their families at home money, much of which would probably have been ill expended, was attended with signal success; more than 71,000*l.* having been thus sent home by the soldiers and seamen, besides 35,000*l.* by the army works corps; making 106,000*l.*

Gibraltar and
Malta.

Last May, Money Order Offices were opened at Gibraltar and Malta, and they have been much employed.

Aldershatt.

A further illustration of the benefits of the Money Order system, when rendered available to our army, is afforded by the extent of the remittances made by this means from the soldiers in camp at Aldershatt, which during the past year

amounted to more than 22,000*l.* made up of Orders, the average amount of which was only 1*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.*

Colonial Posts.

Last year the sixpenny rate of postage was extended to letters between this country and the East Indies, Western Australia, and Mauritius; and the only colonies to which the reduced rate is not yet applied are Ascension*, Cape of Good Hope*, Falkland Islands, Gambia, Labuan, Natal, and Vancouver's Island. Reduced Postage.

The colonial Book Post (with the mother country) has been extended to Tasmania, Natal, and Turk's Island, and on the 1st November next will be extended to Victoria. Book Post.

The only colonies which have not yet accepted our offer to establish such a Book Post are, the Falkland Islands, Gambia, Labuan, and Vancouver's Island.

Among the colonies under my postal control an inter-colonial Book Post has now been established. Intercolonial Book Post.

The Admiralty has entered into a contract with the European and Australian Royal Mail Company for the conveyance of a monthly mail between this country and the Australian Colonies via Suez; one half of the cost to be defrayed by the mother country, and one half by the colonies. The company is bound under penalties, which are to be levied without regard to the causes of delay, to carry the mails between Southampton and Melbourne in 54 days; and I cannot doubt that the company will be influenced, not merely by these penalties, but by a sense of duty and a regard for their own credit, to make strenuous exertions to perform the service within the stipulated time, and so to recompense both the colonists and ourselves for the great cost at which this service has been established. Australian Mails.

The contract came into full operation in the course of the last month; but advantage was, before that time, taken of the steam ships sent by the company round the Cape to take up their station in Australia, for forwarding mails more quickly than by sailing vessels.

Under the new arrangement with the Australian colonies, consequent on the establishment of this line of packets, all letters must be prepaid; and so well is the public now prepared

* While this report was being printed the reduced rate was extended to Ascension, and a communication was received announcing its acceptance by the Cape of Good Hope.

for pre-payment, and so successful were the means adopted for making known the alteration, that only 66 letters out of more than 76,000 (or less than one letter in a thousand) were ultimately detained in consequence of the postage not being paid; it having been found practicable to return the other unpaid letters in time to admit of their being re-posted.

Cape of Good
Hope, Mauri-
tius, &c.

A line of mail packets has been contracted for to run monthly to the Cape of Good Hope, and thence to Mauritius, Ceylon, Madras, and Calcutta; the packets, on the return voyage, to call at Ascension and St. Helena.

Independently of this route to Mauritius, the Government of that island has entered into a contract for a mail packet between Mauritius and Aden, to fall in with the Anglo-Indian mail, *viâ* Suez; so that there will be two mails every month by steam between Mauritius and the mother country.

Postal im-
provements in
Colonies.

In my last report I mentioned some returns which I had applied for on the internal postal improvements of the principal colonies, like the returns in the first annual report, showing the improvements in foreign countries. Except those from the Cape of Good Hope and Natal (asked for nearly two years ago), the colonial returns have now all arrived, and their substance, as respects all the larger colonies, will be found in the Appendix, page 41; from a perusal of which the following facts will be gleaned:—

Rates of
Postage.

The lowest postage in all the colonies and dependencies embraced in the returns (19 in number) is in India; where (for the smallest weight) it is a uniform charge of $0\frac{3}{4}d.$ only. The weight allowed for this charge is certainly very little, being only the $\frac{1}{16}$ oz.; but, it must be remembered, on the other hand, that the country over which the letter may be conveyed is of vast extent.

In Barbadoes and Trinidad there is a uniform rate of $1d.$, and in New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, New Zealand, Mauritius, and Prince Edward Island, a uniform rate of $2d.$; except that in New South Wales and Western Australia there is, in some cases, a lower charge for letters posted and delivered in the same town. In Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland (with a similar exception), there is a uniform rate of $2\frac{1}{2}d.$; and in Victoria and Tasmania (with a like exception) a uniform rate of $4d.$

In Jamaica, Ceylon, and the Gold Coast, the postage still varies according to distance; the rate in Jamaica being from 4*d.* to 8*d.*, in Ceylon from 1*d.* to 6*d.*, and on the Gold Coast from 6*d.* to 1*s.*

The posts in Ceylon and the Gold Coast are not under my control; and as respects Jamaica, I would remark that, as negotiations have been some time in progress for transferring the management of the posts to the Colonial Government, I have refrained as much as possible from making alterations, thinking it better that they should be postponed until the transfer has been effected.

It is stated that an attempt was made, in 1841, to establish internal posts in Sierra Leone, but that the attempt "signally failed from want of correspondents."

In the great majority of cases the weight for a single rate of postage has been fixed, as in the mother country, at half an ounce. The exceptions are India (already mentioned) and Ceylon, the weight in the latter being a quarter of an ounce.

In thirteen of the colonies postage stamps have been introduced; and in five, viz., New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia, and Trinidad, prepayment is compulsory; while in India, South Australia, Mauritius, and Barbadoes, although prepayment is not compulsory, an increased charge is made when the payment is delayed. Postage Stamps.

In most of the colonies, owing in part probably to the thinness of the population, the Post Office is at present conducted at a loss; and the loss seems hitherto to have been increased generally by the reductions that have been made in the rates of postage. Revenue and Expenditure.

I think it will be well to apply from time to time, say once in ten years, for new returns, such as the foregoing, both from the colonies and foreign countries, in order that the public may periodically be informed of the progress in postal improvement, not only in the United Kingdom, but abroad. Returns from colonies and foreign countries.

Foreign Posts.

The new postal convention with France, portions of which had been previously agreed upon, was last year completed. Besides a large reduction in the international postage, which had already come into operation, the new provisions include a great mutual reduction of transit rates and of charges for the conveyance of letters by Mail packets. French Postal Convention.

These charges have not only been reduced, but in many cases much simplified; and it has thus become practicable to lower and render more uniform the postage between the United Kingdom and many foreign countries, the correspondence with which has to pass through France or to be conveyed by French packets; while a like power has been given to France with regard to the correspondence sent by her through this country or in English packets.

The reductions in the charge for conveyance extend to newspapers and books equally with letters.

Reductions in
Postage.

The subjoined Table shows the principal reductions in foreign postage which the new French convention has already been the means of effecting; and when conventions have been concluded with some of the countries enumerated in this Table, further reductions will no doubt be made.

The single rate of postage on letters from the United Kingdom sent through France to—

Spain and Portugal	has been reduced from 10 <i>d.</i> to	8 <i>d.</i>
Sardinia	10 <i>d.</i> to	6 <i>d.</i>
To Switzerland, Baden, Bavaria and Wurtemberg, the Rhenish Provinces of Prussia, the German States, the Free Cities of Hamburgh, Bremen, and Lubeck	8 <i>d.</i> to	6 <i>d.</i>
To Saxony, Brunswick, Hanover, Oldenburgh, &c.	1 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i> to	8 <i>d.</i>
To Denmark, Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and Austria	1 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i> to	9 <i>d.</i>
To Papal States, Two Sicilies, and Greece	1 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i> to	11 <i>d.</i>
To Turkey and the Danubian Provinces	1 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i> to	1 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i>
To places in Turkey, &c., where France maintains Post Offices	1 <i>s.</i> to	6 <i>d.</i>

with reductions to the same rates in the postage on letters from these countries to the United Kingdom.

Upon letters forwarded to the East Indies and Australia, viâ Marseilles, a reduction in the French transit rate has been made from 5*d.* to 3*d.* the quarter ounce; thus making the total charge upon a quarter ounce letter sent by that route only 9*d.*

I hoped to have been able to announce the completion of the new postal conventions, mentioned in the last Report, with Belgium, the German Postal Union, and Spain; but in this I am disappointed. The convention with Belgium, however, has made progress, though slowly; as has that with Spain. The latter, indeed, seemed on the eve of completion, when the political convulsions last summer brought the negotiation to a stand; but it has again been resumed.

Postal conventions with Belgium, German Postal Union, and Spain.

The convention with the German Postal Union is waiting until the different States concerned have delegated to Prussia the necessary powers for acting in the matter as their representative.

I have hitherto been unable to obtain from the Portuguese Government their assent to a reduction even in the postage between this country and Madeira (which is at present excessive), far less to a comprehensive reduction in all the rates of postage between the Portuguese dominions and the United Kingdom.

Madeira.

On several occasions I have been pressed by English residents in Madeira, and by their friends in England, to reduce the British part of the postage without reference to proceedings in Portugal; but such a course would greatly lessen the inducement to the Portuguese Government to reduce its share of the postage, since even without such reduction it would enjoy much of the benefit that would arise from the increased number of letters consequent on our reduction.

Negotiations are in progress for a new postal convention with the United States; one of its provisions being a reduction of the postage between the two countries from 1s. the half-ounce letter to 6d.

United States.

Negotiations have also commenced for a postal treaty with Sardinia.

Sardinia.

I would again express my strong desire, concurred in, as I have the pleasure of knowing, by your Lordships, for the unrestricted postal intercourse, not only in letters, but in newspapers and books, with every country in the world. It is, however, necessary to remind many who call for low rates of foreign postage, that these are matters which do not rest with the British Government alone.

General reduction of Foreign Postage.

As it has been found that improvements are much impeded by the long periods for which several postal conventions had been concluded, it is provided in every new convention that power shall be given to terminate it on a moderate notice;

Conventions made terminable on moderate notice.

and advantage is taken of every legitimate opportunity for bringing to an end and reconstructing every convention which does not contain such provision.

Transit rate
across Isthmus
of Panama.

I have not yet been able to obtain a reduction in the excessive charges made for conveying letters and newspapers across the Isthmus of Panama, but I hope soon to do so.

Registration of
Letters to
United States.

Arrangements have been made by which any letters passing between this country and the United States may be registered.

Post Office in
Turkey.

With a view to the organization of an improved postal system in the Turkish dominions, the services of Mr. Smith, the chief officer employed in the English Post Offices established in Turkey and in the Crimea during the war, (and who discharged his duties in a very creditable manner), have been offered to the Turkish Government, and have been accepted.

Revenue and Expenditure.

Gross Re-
venue.

The Gross Revenue, Expenditure, and Net Revenue of the Department in the year 1856 were as follows * :—

GROSS REVENUE.			
<i>Letters, Books, Packets, &c. :</i>	£		£
England - - -	2,295,685	}	2,764,606†
Ireland - - -	214,488		
Scotland - - -	254,433		
<i>Commission on Money Orders :</i>	£		
England - - -	87,772	}	103,348‡
Ireland - - -	7,579		
Scotland - - -	7,997		
Total - - -			£ 2,867,954

This Total shows an increase in the Gross Revenue, during the year, of upwards of £150,000, or rather more than 5½ per cent.

* At page 47 in the Appendix a statement is given of the receipts and expenditure in each year since 1837; also (at page 48) a comparative Return for the last two years of the amount of Postage collected in many large towns

† This is exclusive of "Returns" for refused letters, &c.

‡ These are the sums actually brought to account of revenue and consequently somewhat different from those stated at page 11, which show the amount of commission on the Orders issued during the year.

As compared with the first year of Penny Postage (1840), the Gross Revenue has increased by 111 per cent., or more than double; and, even as compared with the last year of high rates of postage (1839), there has been an increase of 20 per cent., or £477,000.

EXPENDITURE.

The following Statement gives both the Actual Expenditure of the Post Office during the years 1855 and 1856, and the Expenditure proper to those years.

Actual Expenditure.		Heads of Service.	Expenditure properly appertaining to the year (partly estimated).	
1855.	1856.		1855.	1856.
£	£		£	£
864,660	909,094	Salaries, Pensions, &c. - - -	864,660	909,094
10,433	29,310	Hereditary Pensions - - -	-	-
28,195	33,330	Buildings - - -	28,195	33,330
		CONVEYANCE OF MAILS.		
440,320	376,363	By Railways - - -	401,000	419,000
159,810	162,837	„ Coaches, Carts, &c., and Wages of Mail Guards - - -	159,810	162,837
15,522	14,309	„ Mail Packets,* and Private Ships	15,522	14,309
31,678	26,164	Manufacture of Postage Stamps, &c.	31,678	26,164
100,746	108,822	Miscellaneous, including the conveyance of Mails in Colonies, under the postal direction of the Postmaster-General; the conveyance of the Mails through Egypt; the Cost of the Army Post Office; Clothing for Letter Carriers and Guards; Rents, Taxes, Law Expenses, &c. - -	100,746	108,822
£1,651,364	£1,660,229	Totals.	£1,601,611	£1,673,566

The foregoing statement shows that in the expenditure properly appertaining to the year the increase was $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

* The Packet service is for the most part under the superintendence of the Admiralty, and is borne on the expenditure of that Department; the Contractors on the several lines being subject, in most cases, to conditions, some of which have been framed with other objects than the efficiency of the postal service. The above sum does not include the payments made by the Admiralty.

The omission in the expenditure of the Post Office of such portion of the cost of these Packets as may fairly be chargeable to that Department is in part counter-balanced by the omission (under the head of Revenue) of the charge for the transmission (Inland) of stamped newspapers, amounting to upwards of £168,000.

The addition of 45,000*l.* under the head Salaries, Pensions, &c., may be divided as follows :—

	£
Salaries and Travelling Allowances of Surveyors, Surveyors' Clerks, and Clerks in charge of Post Offices, &c. - - -	5,000
Salaries, Allowances, and Wages to Provincial Postmasters, Sub-Postmasters, Letter Carriers, Sorters, Stampers, and Porters -	30,000
Pensions to retired officers - - -	7,000
Miscellaneous - - - - -	3,000
	<hr/>
	£45,000
	<hr/>

Provincial
Offices.

Part of the larger amount of salaries and wages at Provincial Offices is for increased force, affording additional accommodation to the public; but part is attributable to the revisions of Provincial Offices which have been carried out during the year (and which have generally been attended with an augmentation of salaries), and to the payment of annual increments of salaries and wages to the officers of those provincial establishments which were revised in the previous year.

This revision, referred to in the two previous Reports, and which was instituted with a view of adjusting the force in each instance to the amount of duty, and of establishing a proper scale of salaries, was last year made in 68 Provincial Offices, and is now nearly completed.

A portion of the increased expense at Provincial Offices is attributable to the payment from the revenue for substitutes for Clerks, Sorters, Letter Carriers, &c., during the annual holiday of a fortnight now granted to provincial Officers.

Buildings.

The increase in the cost of buildings is attributable partly to improvements in the Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, partly to expenses connected with the new London District Offices, and partly to alterations and new erections in provincial towns, the latter item including a final payment for the erection of the new Post Office at Glasgow.

Letter Carriers.

1,000*l.* of the increase under the head "Miscellaneous" is for the clothing of Letter Carriers. Uniform clothing is now supplied to the Letter Carriers in London, Dublin, Edinburgh,

Cork, Belfast, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and seventeen other provincial towns.

The increase of actual expenditure under the head of Hereditary Pensions was caused by the redemption, at a cost of 19,399*l.*, of the fourth part of the pension of 4,000*l.*, payable out of the Post Office Revenue to the heirs of the Duke of Schomberg. The burden of the remaining part will next year be transferred from the Post Office Revenue to the Consolidated Fund.

NET REVENUE.

The Net Revenue last year, taking it at the difference between the Gross Revenue and the Expenditure properly appertaining to the year, was nearly 1,200,000*l.*; showing an increase, as compared with the previous year, of about 7 per cent.

Accounts.

Great efforts have been made to facilitate the performance of the duties in the Receiver and Accountant-General's Department.

New Books of Record and of Allowances have been prepared for the guidance of the officers in the several branches. A detailed description of all the duties of the Department has been drawn up; and in it the rules to be observed, the course of action to be adopted, and the checks to be maintained (as well for the security of the officers as for the security of the revenue) have been carefully and minutely explained. This general book of instructions is illustrated by a collection of all the Forms used in the office, specimens of all the Accounts and Periodical Returns rendered by or to the Department, and patterns of all the books of account kept in the office. Each officer in the department has by him, for reference, a copy of so much of the Book of Instructions as may relate to the duties allotted to him.

Staff of Officers.

The number of officers and servants of the Department, exclusive of 118 in the colonies, of 55 agents in

foreign countries, and of 8 Marine Mail officers, is as follows :—

On 31st Dec. 1855.		On 31st Dec. 1856.
1	Postmaster-General - - - - -	1
5	{ Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, and Secre- taries for Ireland and Scotland }	5
13	Surveyors - - - - -	15
17	{ Other Superior Officers: i. e., Heads of Departments, Chief Clerks in the Metro- politan Offices, &c. - - - - - }	19
10,498	Postmasters - - - - -	10,866
1,519	Clerks, &c. - - - - -	1,593*
180	Guards - - - - -	204
10,314	Letter Carriers, Messengers, &c. - - -	10,427
22,547		23,130

Of the above staff about 1,700 are attached to the chief office in London, and (including this number) about 3,200 are employed in the London District.

It will be remarked that there has been an increase in the number of surveyors. This increase is in England, where not only have the separate districts been reduced in extent, but the whole have been better arranged with reference to the main lines of railway.

By the annual report of Dr. Lewis, the medical officer,† your Lordships will perceive that the general health of the Clerks, Letter Carriers, and other persons attached to the chief office, has been good. The average period of absence from duty on account of illness last year was at the rate of 7½ days for each officer, and the whole number of deaths was only 11, or about six in a thousand.

In my last report I called attention to the great benefit that would result from providing better dwellings for the Letter Carriers; and I stated that the Department would be ready to co-operate with any public company that might undertake to erect such dwellings, by arranging to pay the rents out of the wages of those Letter Carriers (who would probably be numerous) who might desire to occupy them; thus securing the company from loss of rent. The subject is again referred to in the Medical Report, but hitherto no specific proposal has been received.

* This number is exclusive of persons whose time is partially occupied in the service of the Department, but who are not regularly appointed Officers, being engaged at the discretion of the Postmasters, to whom an allowance is made for that purpose.

† Appendix, page 49.

Medical Re-
port.

Better Dwell-
ings for
Letter Carriers.

The officers of the Department show an increasing desire to avail themselves of the provision for assisting them in insuring their lives ; as exhibited in the following Table :—

TABLE showing the AMOUNT and NATURE of the Aid in Payment of Premiums on Life Insurances, afforded to Officers of the Post Office of the United Kingdom in the year 1856.

	Policies not exceeding £50. Above £50 but not exceeding £100. Above £100 but not exceeding £150. Above £150 but not exceeding £200. Above £200 but not exceeding £250.					Policies exceeding £250.	Total Number insured.	Per-centage of the Insured to the Employed.	Total Number insured in 1855.	Per-centage of Insured to Employed in 1855.	Amount paid in aid of Premiums in 1856.	Amount paid in aid of Premiums in 1855.
England -	27	315	15	169	13	385	924	5½	701	4½	£ 1,161 2 0	£ 959 4 7
Ireland -	—	15	3	15	—	51	84	3½	80	3	143 2 6	142 15 11
Scotland -	10	68	4	35	3	78	198	6½	171	nearly 7	239 16 5	212 18 6
In 1856 -	37	398	22	219	16	514	1,206	—	—	—	£1,544 0 11	—
In 1855 -	24	251	22	178	12	465	—	—	952	—	—	£1,314 19 0
Increase -	13	147	—	41	4	49	—	—	254	—	—	£229 1 11

The precise total sum for which the officers who received aid in 1856 had insured their lives cannot be given, but the Receiver and Accountant-General states with confidence that it is not less than 230,000/.

TABLE showing the AGES at which the various Officers enumerated in the foregoing Table insured their Lives.

Ages.	England and Wales.	Ireland.	Scotland.	United Kingdom in 1856.	United Kingdom in 1855.
Under 20 years -	5	2	2	9	7
20 years and under 30 -	211	16	56	283	173
30 " " 40 -	390	28	91	509	402
40 " " 50 -	213	26	30	269	245
50 " " 60 -	89	10	15	114	100
60 years and upwards -	16	2	4	22	25
Totals -	924	84	198	1,206	952

The foregoing Tables show an increase of 254 in the number of persons availing themselves of the aid offered, and an increase of 229/ in the amount of aid granted.

It is believed that almost the whole of the 254 additional applications came from officers newly insured, and who were induced to insure by the advantages held out to them.

Besides the sum of 1,544*l.* paid to the officers enumerated in the foregoing Tables, 322*l.* was paid in aid of the premiums of 200 Letter Carriers, who were formerly contributors to the "Letter Carriers' Funeral Fund," and who have now effected insurances for 50*l.* each with the "Provident Clerks Mutual Life Association;" the Department (according to an arrangement mentioned in the last Annual Report) paying the difference between the premium now demanded from each Letter Carrier, and that which he would have had to pay if he had insured his life when he first entered the service.

The satisfaction with which this measure has been received by those for whose benefit it was intended has been expressed in a letter which will be found in the Appendix, page 64.

Of the officers in each part of the kingdom who are allowed to receive aid in insuring their lives, including the 200 Letter Carriers just referred to (a privilege extending to all who can properly be regarded as officers of the Department), about 6 per cent. now insure under this arrangement in England and Wales, nearly 7 per cent. in Scotland, and about 3 per cent. in Ireland.

General Conduct of Officers.

Further experience has tended to confirm the opinion expressed in my last Report of the great benefit conferred on the Department by the adoption of the measures recommended by the Treasury Commissioners for excluding from the service unfit persons, and for rendering promotion dependent on merit alone.

London Office.

Mr. Parkhurst, Chief Clerk of the Secretarial Department of the Head Office in London, states as follows:—

"I am happy to be enabled to say that the general conduct of the Officers is commendable, and that the discipline and working order of the Office are in a very satisfactory state.

"Ready and willing attention to the duties, and a desire to afford useful and active assistance in the performance of them, are evinced by the Officers; and there is reason to congratulate the Department that their zeal has been generally stimulated and increased by the prospect of reward held out to those whose meritorious conduct and proved good service now give them a claim to advancement.

Mr. Bokenham, Controller of the Circulation Department, reports:—"During the past year the Officers of the Circulation Office of all grades have been diligent and zealous in the discharge of their several duties; in confirmation of this point I may refer to my reports upon the subject of their annual and periodical increments, from the benefit of which it has been necessary for me to recommend that but very few should be excepted. Indeed, it is no more than justice that I should state, that as a body they have rendered every aid in their power in carrying into effect the great alterations which, for the improvement of the Public Service, have recently been introduced into the Department.

"Some cases of misconduct and of error I must admit have occurred; but these, it was obvious, were to be expected among the very large body of men under my control. They affect, however, but a small proportion of the whole number of individuals employed; and properly noticed, as they arose, they have not in any way injured the general discipline or efficiency of the service.

"Commencing with the last year, every Officer (except the few who by misconduct or otherwise have been debarred from it) has been allowed an annual holiday, and the boon has been greatly appreciated."

Mr. Scudamore, Receiver and Accountant General, says:—"I have much pleasure in reporting that the conduct of the Officers of this Department has been most satisfactory throughout the past year.

"There has been a large increase in the duties of the Department. There has been an increase of more than 10,000 letters in the ordinary remittances from Postmasters, besides which, as the duty of issuing Postal Guides has been added to the work of the Department during the year, we have had upwards of 3,000 applications for Postal Guides, each of which contained cash, and necessitated the issue of a parcel of Guides.

"The additions which have been made to the total staff of the Post Office, the revisions which have been carried out in the provincial establishments, the employment of substitutes in the room of provincial Officers absent on leave, and the increase in the number of applications for aid in the payment of Insurance Premiums, have all added largely to the work of this Department; but the whole of the duties have been duly, promptly, and cheerfully performed without any addition to the force.

“ I have had the overtime given by the Officers of this Department carefully and exactly computed ; and I find that, after allowing for under time, and deducting the Saturday half holiday, they have given to the Office overtime equal (for a single man) to 209 working days.”

Mr. Edward Page, Inspector General of Mails, says :—
“ I have much pleasure in stating that the conduct during the past year of the Officers under my control has been very satisfactory.

“ Not only have the ordinary duties allotted to them been performed carefully and well, but a general willingness has been shewn by the whole body to meet, by extra exertion, any unusual pressure of duty that may have occasionally arisen. I am glad to report also that much interest seems to be taken by most of the Clerks in the general duty of the office, and that a feeling of emulation, beneficial to the service, is observable.

“ I have no doubt that the conduct of the Officers generally has been influenced by the new system of promotion, and that it is to the introduction of this system that the improvement to which I have alluded is to a great extent attributable.

“ Although it is more than questionable whether the result of a competitive examination will not, in many cases, fail to point to the best and most suitable men for a public department, there can, I think, be no question, that the effect of the present system of examination, combined with probation, has been to exclude men of defective education, and thus to improve the general tone of the office.”

Mr. Jackson, Controller of the Money Order Department, states :—“ I cannot conclude this report without expressing the gratification I feel in being able to testify to the zealous and effective manner in which the Chief Clerk and the First Class Officers have superintended the various duties devolving on them ; while the general good conduct and industry of the great body of Clerks, especially those of the Second Class, are worthy of all commendation. Each Officer has exerted himself to the utmost ; and I am happy to say that, notwithstanding the great increase of business, no arrears have, under any circumstances, been permitted to accrue. I also feel bound to state that the Officers generally seem fully to appreciate the great boon accorded by the early closing on the Saturday ; and that on no

“ occasion has the business suffered from the extension
“ of this indulgence.”

Mr. Cornwall, Secretary in Ireland, states :—“ I have Dublin Office.
“ much satisfaction in being enabled to report favourably of
“ the Officers generally of the Department, and of the excel-
“ lent state of discipline at the present time.

“ The preliminary examinations to which Clerks and
“ Letter Carriers are now subjected previous to appointment
“ will have the effect of excluding men not possessing the
“ necessary qualifications for these situations, and must
“ eventually prove to be most beneficial to the Department.
“ During the past year numerous persons nominated as
“ Clerks and Letter Carriers in Ireland were rejected by the
“ Civil Service Commissioners.

“ With respect to the system of promotion by merit, there
“ have been but few opportunities in Ireland of testing it.
“ These few, however, enable me to speak in praise of
“ the facilities it unquestionably affords of advancing to
“ responsible positions Officers whose talents justly entitle
“ them to recognition and reward ; and if the guiding prin-
“ ciple be to advance the best qualified only, the result must
“ inevitably be, that every Officer who has the ambition to
“ elevate himself will lose no opportunity of endeavouring
“ to deserve the reward he so justly seeks for.

“ I cannot, moreover, but think that the system of pro-
“ motion by merit has the effect of inducing the Officers
“ generally to take a more personal interest in the duties
“ in which they are employed. It no doubt increases the
“ facilities for favouritism, but the same may be said of
“ almost any system ; for if the head of a Department be so
“ disposed, he will find means of improperly exercising the
“ power he possesses.

* * * * *

“ It may not be considered out of place here to allude to
“ the Saturday half holiday which was granted to the Officers
“ of the Dublin Post Office in June last, upon the under-
“ standing that there should be no arrear of work on the
“ Friday afternoon. In order to guard against this, the
“ officers attend extra hours throughout the week, so that
“ the business is always in such a forward state as to preclude
“ the possibility of any arrear ; therefore the boon, which is
“ greatly prized, is as advantageous to the public service as
“ it is to the Officers of the Department.

Mr. Long, Accountant in the Dublin Office, states that owing to the zeal and attention of his Clerks, it has been found possible to perform an increased business without any addition to the staff.

Mr. Gladstone, Controller of the Sorting Office, says:—
 “ I am glad to take this opportunity of alluding to the
 “ working, during the past year, of the class of Sub-Sorters
 “ selected from the Letter Carriers, and for the first time
 “ tried in Dublin in 1855. The system works remarkably
 “ well, and the conduct of the persons so selected has been
 “ highly satisfactory.”

Edinburgh
Office.

Mr. Abbott, Secretary in Scotland, states:—“ I beg to
 “ enclose reports from the heads of the several branches of
 “ this establishment as to the conduct of the Officers under
 “ their control ; and I am happy to say that these reports are
 “ of the most satisfactory character.

“ As regards the way in which the present systems of
 “ appointment and promotion work, I am of opinion that
 “ the restriction of the age for admission into the service
 “ has been highly advantageous, and might be yet more
 “ limited ; that the previous examination of the parties
 “ nominated for situations is a measure of great importance
 “ to the improvement of the service by securing more
 “ efficient Officers ; but considering the different duties of
 “ the Account, the Secretary’s, and the Sorting branches, I
 “ am inclined to believe that the examination should have
 “ more special reference to the vacancy the candidate
 “ is to fill than to his general knowledge on certain subjects
 “ proposed for all in the same class ; more especially, as
 “ regards persons nominated to the Sorting Office, where
 “ manual dexterity, quick sight, and physical activity are
 “ more valuable than mere educational acquirements.”

The following are extracts from the reports referred to by Mr. Abbott:—

Mr. Lang, Controller of the Circulation Department, says,
 “ With reference to the conduct of the Officers of this
 “ department, it affords me great satisfaction to be
 “ enabled to report that the conduct of the men since
 “ the general revision of 1855 has been exemplary ; and
 “ that, since that period, no cases of insubordination or
 “ breach of discipline have occurred on the part of the
 “ men advanced from the Letter Carriers’ department.

“ The correctness and activity of the Officers in the per-
 “ formance of the peculiar duties of the Sorting branch

“ merit my entire approbation, and I beg to notice in a special manner the readiness with which they have come forward upon all occasions of pressure to accelerate the delivery of the correspondence.”

Mr. Marrable, Accountant in the Edinburgh Office, says, “ I beg leave to report that the conduct of the Officers in this department during the year 1856 has been highly satisfactory. In no case has it been my duty to report an Officer for misconduct. Considering that the force consists of 37 Officers and 4 Messengers, this is very creditable to the office.”

“ The examination by a Commissioner of candidates for appointments to the Accountant’s Office has this year come practically into operation ; and it must have the effect of gradually introducing into the service a better qualified and more efficient class of Officers than has, generally speaking, hitherto belonged to it.

“ The system of promotion by merit, and not by seniority, introduced last year into the Department, under the recommendation of the Commissioners, has in the current year been practically tested in this Department, and has had the effect of stimulating the zeal and activity of the Officers attached to it.

“ Since the 14th June, a half holiday on Saturday has been enjoyed by the Officers of the Department, a boon on the part of His Grace the Postmaster General which has been very gratefully received by all. The indulgence, moreover, has not involved the employment of any additional force in the Accountant’s office, the work being brought up by the extra exertions of the Officers on the other official days of the week.

Mr. Newman, one of the English Surveyors, states :—
 “ During the year the plan of placing the Clerks, Letter Carriers, &c., at certain offices on a scale of salary, and promoting them by merit alone, has been carried out, and in my own district it certainly works very well ; and the result will be, I have no doubt, gradually to produce a very great improvement in our country offices.”

Provincial
Offices.

Miscellaneous.

The first Report contained a brief history of the Post Office in England, followed, in the Second Report, by a similar account of the Post Office in Scotland ; and in the Appendix to the present Report will be found a like record of the

History of
Post Office in
Ireland.

Post Office in Ireland, drawn up by Mr. Trollope, one of the Surveyors in that part of the United Kingdom.

Postal Guide.

The British Postal Guide, mentioned in the last Report as in preparation, has been completed, and is now published on the first day of each quarter. In addition to a gratuitous supply to Postmasters, and to many of the public offices, there has been a sale to the public of about 26,000; showing that the book has been generally acceptable.

Some time ago an arrangement was made for impressing with Postage Stamps any paper, whether as letters or envelopes, which the public might send for that purpose to the office of Inland Revenue, at Somerset House; but it appears that little use is made of this privilege, the stamps thus impressed being less than one per cent. of the whole number issued.

Unregistered Letters.

In spite of frequent advice to the contrary, money and other valuable articles are still constantly sent in unregistered letters; thus offering a temptation to theft which often proves irresistible, and bringing many a man in the service of the Post Office to disgrace and ruin, who, but for the thoughtlessness or parsimony of others, might have remained an honest and useful member of society.

Even when no one yields to the temptation, and when blame of no kind attaches to any officer, the practice not unfrequently raises groundless suspicion, as will be seen by the following statement:—

A banker, residing in a country town in Scotland, reported on the 7th November last, that a letter containing two 20*l.* notes and two 1*l.* notes, addressed to him by another banker and posted on the 4th September at a town 10 miles distant, had not come to hand. On application, the sender could not state either the numbers or the dates of the notes. He had, moreover, allowed upwards of two months to intervene before taking any steps to ascertain whether his letter had reached its destination.

As this valuable letter had been posted without the precaution of registration, and had the words "County Rates" on the envelope, it was supposed to have excited the cupidity of some one connected with one or other of the two Post Offices concerned; and an officer was immediately despatched to investigate the case. The complainant reiterated the statement that the letter had not reached him, but, within half an hour of the officer's departure, an inmate of the house, having made a fresh search, found the letter among some papers in a press where it had apparently been placed unopened when received.

The following also are some of the numerous cases of complaint against the Post Office when the fault really rested elsewhere.

Unfounded
Complaints
against Post
Office.

A bank agent sent a letter containing valuable enclosures to another bank agent. The letter was presumed to have been lost by the Post Office; but no trace of it could be obtained there, and the applicant was informed accordingly. It subsequently appeared that the son of the person to whom the letter had been addressed had called at the Post Office, and received the letter, and that he had afterwards left the town for the holidays, carrying the letter away with him in his pocket, where it had remained.

A merchant sent his errand boy to post a letter, and to purchase a stamp to put upon it. The letter contained negotiable bills amounting to 1,200*l.*, and as the merchant did not receive an acknowledgment from his correspondent, he cast the blame on the Post Office. An inquiry followed which resulted in showing that the errand boy had met another boy on a similar mission, who undertook to post the letter in question. On further reflection, however, the latter resolved to convert the penny intended for a postage stamp into sweetmeats, which he did, and then destroyed the letter with its contents, carrying the fragments into a field near the Post Office, where they were found hidden.

The Secretary of a Charitable Institution in London gave directions for posting a large number of "Election Papers;" and supposed that these directions had been duly acted upon. Shortly, however, he received complaints of the non-receipt of many of the papers, and in other cases of delay. He at once made a complaint at the Post Office; but, on examination, circumstances soon came to light which cast suspicion on the person employed to post the notices, although this man had been many years in the service of the society, and was supposed to be of strict integrity. Ultimately, the man confessed that he had embezzled the postage (3*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.*), and had endeavoured to deliver the election papers himself.

A short time since a Registered Letter was posted at Newcastle, addressed to a banker in Edinburgh, who, not receiving it according to his expectation, sent a telegraphic message to learn why it had not been forwarded. The banker supposed that the letter had been lost or purloined in the Post Office; but it was at last proved that it had been duly delivered to the bank porter, who had locked it up in his desk and forgotten it.

A person lately stated that twelve sovereigns had been abstracted from an envelope which he enclosed in his letter of application; but he was told in reply that the envelope bore evidence that it had not contained coin to that amount. The applicant then communicated with the sender of the envelope, who persisted in declaring that she had put therein the amount in question. On this an officer was despatched to investigate the matter, and upon his requiring the woman who had sent the envelope to accompany him before a magistrate, to attest the truth of her statement upon oath, she confessed that the statement was false, and explained her conduct by saying that she had promised to lend the person to whom the envelope had been addressed 12*l.*, but that she had been unwilling to do so, as she felt sure that she should never get her money back again; and that she had determined therefore to keep her money, and throw the blame on the Post Office.

Public attention has been called to the inconvenience which frequently arises from the use of wax in sealing letters which are to be closely packed for a considerable time, especially if they are likely to be exposed to heat. The following is a case in point:—

A person at Roscrea sent a money letter to a friend at Kingstown which was not received until about two months after it was posted; the letter having adhered to the seal of another letter, and performed a voyage to Nova Scotia and back.

Sometimes, though rarely, persons who may have made complaints which on investigation proved to be groundless, have written to express their regret; but no instance of a more frank and handsome apology is recollected by the officers of the Department than one lately received from the Lord Chancellor, conveyed in a letter which will be found in the Appendix, page 63.

The attention of the Department had for some time been directed to the importance of effecting some improvement in the legibility of our stamps which show the date and place of posting, when this subject was brought prominently before the public by the Lord Chief Justice. Active measures had already been taken to obtain a better ink, to improve the construction of the “pad,” and to devise a machine which, consistently with the necessary rapidity, should impress the stamp more distinctly than can be done by hand. The requirements of the office, and the difficulties to be overcome

in fulfilling them, are not generally understood, and a vast number of very crude suggestions have consequently been made. A machine has, however, been invented by Mr. Pearson Hill, one of the clerks in the Secretary's office, which bids fair to accomplish all that is required.

In recording the chief events of last year, I must not omit the melancholy loss, by shipwreck, of the "Violet" mail packet, between Ostend and Dover; a catastrophe attributed at the time, in one of our public journals, to an undue strictness by the Department in requiring mail packets to put to sea at the appointed time, even in a violent storm.

Wreck of
Dover and
Ostend Mail
Packet.

I need scarcely say that no such rule exists, and that no such orders had been given. It would certainly be the duty of the captain of a mail packet not to allow slight obstacles to cause delay; but on this point we may always fully rely on the courage and sense of duty of a British commander.

Mr. Mortleman, the officer in immediate charge of the mail bags, acted on the occasion with a presence of mind and forethought which reflect honour on his memory. On seeing that the vessel could not be saved, he must have removed the cases containing the mail bags from the hold, and have so placed them, that when the ship went down they might float; a proceeding which ultimately led to the recovery of all the bags except one containing despatches, of which, from their nature, it was possible to obtain copies. I may add, that a similar spirit of determination to perform their duty to the last, has, on several previous occasions of exposure to imminent danger, distinguished the conduct of our officers.

An instance calling for grateful acknowledgment on my part occurred last year, of prompt and gratuitous assistance given by two foreign governments in the conveyance of a large mail from India, which was on board a ship belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company bound for Southampton, when owing to an accident to the machinery the vessel became unable to proceed. The casualty happened near Tunis, and the Bey gave immediate orders for a steam vessel in his own service to be got ready to convey both the mail and passengers, without cost, to Marseilles, which was accordingly done; and from Mar-

Indian Mail.

seilles the mail was, by the French Government, forwarded gratuitously to Calais; whereas under ordinary circumstances a mail of the same weight would for this part of the journey alone have entailed a charge of more than 800*l*.

I have the honour to be, my Lords,

Your Lordships' obedient servant,

ARGYLL.

General Post Office,
17th March 1857.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX (A.)

TABLE showing what Per-centage of the LETTER CARRIERS in London employed in the first Morning Delivery of each Day during the first SIX WEEKS of 1856 and 1857 respectively completed their DELIVERIES at the TIMES stated below.

Times at which the Deliveries were completed.	First Six Weeks of 1856.	First Six Weeks of 1857.
	Average time at which the deliveries commenced. } 7.55 A.M.	Average time at which the deliveries commenced - - } 7.22 A.M.
At, or before 9.0 A.M.	5.022 per cent.	65.152 per cent.
Between 9.0 and 9.15 "	13.999 "	18.046 "
" 9.15 " 9.30 "	25.374 "	9.555 "
" 9.30 " 9.45 "	22.683 "	4.865 "
" 9.45 " 10.0 "	15.537 "	2.021 "
" 10.0 " 10.15 "	8.250 "	.293 "
" 10.15 " 10.30 "	4.925 "	.045 "
" 10.30 " 10.45 "	2.435 "	.011 "
" 10.45 " 11.0 "	1.111 "	.006 "
" 11.0 " 11.15 "	.348 "	.006 "
" 11.15 " 11.30 "	.146 "	
" 11.30 " 11.45 "	.079 "	
" 11.45 " 12.0 noon	.061 "	
" 12.0 " 12.15 P.M.	.006 "	
" 12.15 " 12.30 "	.006 "	
" 12.30 " 12.45 "	.006 "	
At 1.45 "	.006 "	
At 2.10 "	.006 "	
	100.000	100.000

APPENDIX (B.)

NUMBER, as nearly as can be estimated, of CHARGEABLE LETTERS delivered in the UNITED KINGDOM in the Year immediately preceding the first general Reduction of Postage on the 5th Day of December 1839, and in each complete Year subsequent thereto; also (in the first Year) the Number of Franks.

Year ending 31st December.	Delivered in England and Wales.					Total in England and Wales.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.	Total in Ireland.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.	Total in Scotland.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.	Total in United Kingdom.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.
	By Country Offices.	Increase per cent. on the previous year.	In London District, exclusive of Local Letters.	Increase or decrease per cent. on the previous year.	Local Letters in London District.								
Estimated No. of letters, 1839	—	—	—	—	—	59,982,820	—	8,301,901	—	7,623,148	—	75,907,572	—
Estimated No. of franks, 1839	—	—	—	—	—	5,172,284	—	1,084,508	—	336,232	—	6,593,024	—
Estimated No. of letters, 1840	89,071,308	—	23,339,833	—	20,372,382	132,003,325	120	18,210,642	119½	18,554,167	143½	158,768,344	122½
" " " " " "	103,395,077	17	27,836,722	18½	23,108,722	154,471,121	17	20,791,207	14½	21,234,772	14½	196,500,191	16½
" " " " " "	111,115,460	7½	20,385,292	5	23,389,942	163,890,713	6	23,328,154	7½	22,215,883	4½	208,454,431	6
" " " " " "	117,704,474	6	30,908,743	5½	21,881,410	173,401,627	6½	23,482,463	5½	23,473,210	5½	220,450,306	5½
" " " " " "	129,066,023	9½	33,575,936	8½	26,080,460	189,652,419	9½	25,987,188	10½	26,502,077	13	242,091,684	9½
" " " " " "	137,227,431	14	36,007,711	7½	30,828,486	214,153,628	13	25,387,963	10½	28,660,168	8½	271,410,780	12
" " " " " "	162,024,024	10½	30,903,681	10½	33,201,050	235,878,755	10½	32,572,947	14	31,135,060	8½	299,586,762	10½
" " " " " "	175,025,407	7½	48,757,540	9½	34,050,317	253,111,764	7½	33,473,316	9	33,261,163	6½	322,146,243	7½
" " " " " "	180,716,102	3½	43,901,153	5	33,672,747	260,890,002	2½	34,887,481	1½ Dec.	33,503,101	1	328,880,184	2
" " " " " "	187,382,320	3½	45,845,083	½ Dec.	33,060,398	267,188,410	2½	33,463,913	1½	31,740,870	3½	337,309,100	2½
" " " " " "	192,508,023	2½	44,856,170	2½	33,887,544	276,232,642	3½	33,388,885	½ Dec.	35,427,554	2	347,065,071	2½
" " " " " "	199,746,504	3½	47,819,400	6½	40,685,052	288,151,755	4½	35,982,762	1½	36,512,640	3	360,647,187	4
" " " " " "	212,053,733	6½	51,171,423	7	40,403,207	304,208,903	5½	37,440,953	4	37,845,182	3½	379,501,409	5½
" " " " " "	252,504,177	10½	54,402,023	6½	42,816,314	320,722,514	6½	40,410,063	8	40,675,310	7½	410,817,489	8½
" " " " " "	254,022,007	9½	57,163,159	5	46,191,569	353,701,008	8½	41,234,500	2	44,114,009	8½	448,540,301	8
" " " " " "	263,037,527	3½	59,647,510	4½	46,844,063	368,530,340	2½	41,832,834	1½	45,853,002	4	450,210,176	2½
" " " " " "	273,453,824	4½	64,961,321	9	47,801,708	383,900,833	5½	41,851,008	NIL.	48,232,012	5	478,933,808	4½

APPENDIX (C.)

ESTIMATED NUMBER of LETTERS, NEWSPAPERS, and BOOKS between the UNITED KINGDOM and certain COLONIES and FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

—	Letters Outwards.	Letters Inwards.	Letters Inwards and Outwards.	Newspapers and Books Outwards.	Newspapers and Books Inwards.	Newspapers and Books Inwards and Outwards.
Africa, West Coast of	28,800	22,836	51,636	22,884	4,632	27,516
Australia - -	913,733	{ Cannot* be given. }	{ Cannot* be given. }	1,342,466	{ Cannot* be given. }	{ Cannot* be given. }
Belgium - -	325,811	250,564	576,375	202,740	185,460	388,200
Brazils - - -	66,252	80,076	146,328	123,408	60,084	183,492
Bremen - - -	57,166	49,538	106,704	19,608	{ Cannot be given. }	{ Cannot be given. }
Canada - - -	358,284	396,915	755,199	908,028	424,416	1,332,444
Ceylon -	28,722	37,542	66,264	114,084	22,122	136,206
East Indies, viz.— Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Aden, Penang, and Sin- gapore - -	610,482	647,800	1,258,282	979,068	220,687	1,199,755
France - - -	2,184,916	2,021,610	4,206,526	718,296	614,304	1,332,600
German Postal Union	911,957	635,145	1,547,102	586,968	184,380	771,348
Hamburgh - -	385,445	257,649	643,094	149,592	127,868	277,460
Holland - - -	233,632	179,827	413,459	81,636	44,808	126,444
Hong Kong - -	72,522	78,228	150,750	135,930	59,228	165,158
Mauritius - -	20,730	16,530	37,260	43,164	26,250	69,414
Mediterranean,—in- cluding Malta, Alexandria, and Ionian Islands -	234,786	175,056	409,842	92,802	9,420	102,222
Spain and Portu- gal, viz.—Lisbon, Oporto, and Gib- raltar - - -	171,846	164,088	335,934	75,402	4,860	80,262
Sweden - - -	26,015	17,253	43,268	4,776	3,264	8,040
United States - -	1,733,745	1,547,054	3,280,799	1,063,584	872,664	1,936,248
West Indies and Pa- cific - - -	322,716	281,700	604,416	572,412	122,496	694,908

* The disturbance in the service, consequent on the suspension of the contract, renders it impossible to give these numbers for last year.

APPENDIX (D.)

NUMBER and AMOUNT of MONEY ORDERS issued and paid in the UNITED KINGDOM, during the last Eighteen Years.

MONEY ORDERS ISSUED.

Year ending	ENGLAND AND WALES.		IRELAND.		SCOTLAND.		TOTAL, UNITED KINGDOM.	
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.
5 January 1840	142,723	£ 240,063	30,015	£ 47,295	16,183	£ 25,765	188,921	£ 313,124
" 1841	482,764	802,827	53,507	77,167	51,526	80,980	587,797	960,975
" 1842	1,290,115	2,657,969	125,170	215,382	137,560	254,155	1,552,845	3,127,507
" 1843	1,767,626	3,709,778	169,910	295,878	174,444	331,520	2,111,980	4,337,177
" 1844	2,086,009	4,369,344	208,179	358,884	207,335	384,612	2,501,523	5,112,840
" 1845	2,333,693	4,858,885	232,525	391,692	240,585	444,817	2,806,803	5,695,395
" 1846	2,627,443	5,463,453	238,144	435,330	290,539	514,576	3,176,126	6,413,361
" 1847	2,881,699	5,926,473	299,521	519,877	333,859	624,706	3,515,079	7,071,056
" 1848	3,286,375	6,600,658	343,156	585,454	401,654	717,064	4,031,185	7,903,177
" 1849	3,468,823	6,861,303	359,043	604,192	375,785	685,298	4,203,651	8,151,294
From 6 January to 31 December 1850	3,515,839	6,880,865	358,578	592,504	374,474	679,273	4,248,891	8,152,643
" 1 January to 31 December 1851	3,677,112	7,173,622	371,436	623,732	385,165	697,143	4,439,713	8,494,498
" " 1852	3,878,497	7,518,060	392,848	633,359	389,680	709,000	4,661,025	8,880,420
" " 1853	4,158,753	8,061,061	393,879	656,110	395,193	721,106	4,947,825	9,438,277
" " 1854	4,405,365	8,501,517	396,966	662,547	412,959	752,130	5,215,290	9,916,195
" " 1855	4,621,296	8,957,135	409,625	690,809	435,323	814,466	5,466,244	10,462,411
" " 1856	4,901,316	9,403,104	444,720	753,560	461,376	852,615	5,807,412	11,009,279
" " "	5,231,736	10,099,366	461,723	806,942	485,523	899,253	6,178,982	11,805,562

APPENDIX (D.)—continued.

MONEY ORDERS PAID.

Year ending	ENGLAND AND WALES.		IRELAND.		SCOTLAND.		TOTAL, UNITED KINGDOM.	
	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.	Number.	Amount.
5 January 1840	124,004	£ 208,586	47,022	£ 71,426	17,609	£ 31,715	188,615	£ 311,727
" 1841	429,600	739,963	89,388	120,950	50,900	83,372	569,888	944,287
" 1842	1,268,660	2,638,060	158,651	245,887	132,899	256,147	1,560,210	3,140,096
" 1843	1,734,423	3,687,458	191,172	297,156	179,301	348,993	2,104,896	4,393,608
" 1844	2,047,605	4,323,820	232,026	355,973	216,100	411,664	2,495,731	5,091,458
" 1845	2,271,979	4,822,208	263,070	398,061	247,070	469,821	2,782,119	5,690,090
" 1846	2,540,456	5,348,411	316,814	483,339	281,757	539,977	3,139,087	6,371,728
" 1847	2,798,682	5,816,084	395,014	611,320	316,107	616,692	3,509,803	7,044,097
" 1848	3,138,010	6,425,250	545,709	806,770	345,811	666,873	4,029,580	7,998,894
" 1849	3,384,088	6,816,573	470,842	665,523	348,508	670,389	4,203,438	8,152,486
From 6 January to 31 December 1849	3,419,861	6,844,633	476,259	644,430	349,232	669,292	4,245,332	8,158,356
" 1 January to 31 December 1850	3,559,900	7,098,429	503,980	681,943	367,355	702,682	4,431,235	8,483,055
" 1851	3,743,803	7,432,163	531,514	731,713	382,136	723,366	4,657,443	8,376,243
" 1852	4,016,026	7,931,510	526,233	730,490	400,600	761,718	4,942,859	9,428,719
" 1853	4,240,704	8,339,938	551,555	778,196	420,806	802,161	5,213,065	9,920,296
" 1854	4,489,328	8,807,904	531,962	789,021	438,192	855,754	5,459,482	10,452,680
" 1855	4,789,289	9,255,642	547,917	841,270	464,083	905,464	5,801,289	11,002,377
" 1856	5,112,917	9,913,187	562,949	909,361	496,276	971,108	6,172,142	11,793,656

In 1840 the commission on Money Orders was reduced as follows :—
 For any sum not exceeding 2*l.*, from 6*d.* to 3*d.*
 For any sum above 2*l.*, and not exceeding 5*l.*, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 6*d.*

APPENDIX (E.)

STATEMENT showing the AMOUNT of MONEY ORDERS ISSUED and PAID at the undermentioned Head Offices (including their subordinate Offices), during the Years 1855 and 1856.

OFFICES.	1855.		1856.	
	Issues.	Payments.	Issues.	Payments.
ENGLAND.				
	£	£	£	£
Bath - - - - -	75,450	69,762	78,264	72,997
Birmingham - - - - -	179,561	277,950	192,443	305,374
Bradford, Yorkshire - - - - -	42,198	40,423	45,032	41,228
Bristol - - - - -	114,028	190,250	132,477	208,289
Cheltenham - - - - -	53,075	38,525	57,227	41,239
Coventry - - - - -	31,098	22,451	35,663	25,161
Derby - - - - -	48,006	40,594	48,448	43,194
Exeter - - - - -	62,401	73,404	65,899	77,395
Hull - - - - -	87,535	111,734	97,192	118,395
Leeds - - - - -	102,364	129,992	110,485	140,229
Leicester - - - - -	45,807	42,735	47,689	45,788
Liverpool - - - - -	328,556	337,267	358,646	360,874
London - - - - -	1,910,998	3,117,453	2,202,229	3,336,679
Macclesfield - - - - -	16,092	10,536	16,923	11,434
Manchester - - - - -	292,984	352,681	325,029	386,809
Newcastle-on-Tyne - - - - -	90,235	73,532	97,230	83,302
Norwich - - - - -	47,969	59,918	50,822	61,737
Nottingham - - - - -	70,554	64,000	80,727	66,701
Plymouth - - - - -	62,075	60,613	64,115	67,649
Portsmouth - - - - -	81,827	61,328	90,555	70,043
Newcastle, Staffordshire, and Potteries	69,531	77,618	77,097	83,163
Preston - - - - -	54,775	41,555	56,772	47,047
Sheffield - - - - -	78,322	91,292	83,604	93,487
Southampton - - - - -	76,732	66,457	76,901	70,714
Wolverhampton - - - - -	48,539	33,109	50,213	33,437
York - - - - -	69,918	59,452	67,687	63,768
IRELAND.				
Belfast - - - - -	38,196	42,414	41,506	44,375
Cork - - - - -	29,459	35,405	30,062	37,877
Drogheda - - - - -	5,262	7,206	5,473	8,017
Dublin - - - - -	234,971	198,598	266,043	210,558
Limerick - - - - -	16,189	17,753	16,179	20,918
Londonderry - - - - -	10,017	12,614	9,401	11,928
Waterford - - - - -	12,279	10,406	12,476	11,448
SCOTLAND.				
Aberdeen - - - - -	29,744	40,124	32,509	42,426
Dundee - - - - -	31,312	28,902	33,274	29,608
Edinburgh - - - - -	123,512	189,428	128,271	205,383
Glasgow - - - - -	140,865	175,862	153,810	192,199
Perth - - - - -	17,788	16,965	17,996	17,638
Stirling - - - - -	11,288	12,312	11,721	13,899

APPENDIX (F.)

PRINCIPAL INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS in the POSTAL SYSTEMS of the under-mentioned Colonies since the Establishment of PENNY POSTAGE in Great Britain and Ireland in January, 1840.

Note.—The Coins and Weights are given in their nearest English equivalents.

N.B.—The Posts of all the Colonies mentioned in this Return, with the exception of Jamaica, are under the control of the Local Governments.

Colony.	Nature and Date of Improvements.	Present Rates of Postage.	Gross Receipts, Expenses, and Profit or Loss of the Post Office.
BARBADOES	In 1852 an Inland Post was established. A uniform rate of postage has been adopted. Payment in advance is optional, but when letters are not prepaid the postage is doubled. Postage stamps have been introduced.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - - 1d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - 2d. Above 1 oz. and not exceeding 2 oz. - 4d. And so on according to the English scale. Newspapers are charged $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each if prepaid with a stamp; otherwise 1d. Books are charged 1d. the $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Patterns, or covers open at the sides containing patterns or samples, and not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. are charged 1d.	1854. £ Gross receipts - 1,245 Expenses - 1,950 Loss - 705
CANADA	In 1851 a reduced rate of postage was established. Payment in advance is optional. Postage stamps have been introduced.	On ordinary letters about $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. On letters posted and delivered in the same town $\frac{1}{4}$ d. each. Newspapers are conveyed free. Books are charged $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per oz.; the weight of a single packet being limited to 4lbs.	1850 £ Gross receipts - 75,500 Expenses - 55,500 Profit - 20,000 1855. £ Gross receipts - 77,505 Expenses - 102,097 Loss - 24,592
Ceylon	Measures adopted in 1846, and subsequently, have reduced the postage of letters and books, and greatly improved the service.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., 1d. for a distance not more than 25 miles; between 25 miles and 50 miles, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.; between 50 miles and 100 miles, 3d.; between 100 miles and 150 miles, $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.; above 150 miles, 6d. Newspapers are charged 1d. each, irrespective of weight or distance, and books 1d. per oz.	1845. £ Gross receipts - 7,385 Expenses - 6,389 Profit - 996 1854. £ Gross receipts - 7,171 Expenses - 8,595 Loss - 1,424

APPENDIX (F.)—continued.

Colony.	Nature and Date of Improvements.	Present Rates of Postage.	Gross Receipts, Expenses, and Profit or Loss of the Post Office.
GOLD COAST	There was no internal post until 1853, when posts were established along the Coast eastward and westward of Cape Coast Castle.	Postage is regulated by distance; but the distances are not given. There are three rates, viz., 6d., 9d., and 1s. Newspapers are conveyed free of charge.	No Return.
INDIA	In 1839 the postage of a single letter for 100 miles was fixed at half an anna, or about $\frac{3}{4}$ d. In 1854 the present uniform rate of postage was adopted. Payment in advance is optional; but when letters are not prepaid the charge is doubled. Postage stamps have been introduced.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ tola (or about $\frac{1}{16}$ oz.) about $\frac{3}{4}$ d.; above $\frac{1}{4}$ tola, and not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ tola, about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; above $\frac{1}{2}$ tola, and not exceeding 1 tola (rather less than $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.), about 3d.; and so on in proportion. On newspapers not exceeding in weight 4 to 8 (about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.), about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; above 4 tolas and not exceeding 6 tolas (about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.), about 3d.; about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. additional being charged for every additional 3 tolas or fraction of 3 tolas. On books not exceeding 20 tolas (8 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz.), about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. additional being charged for every additional 20 tolas, or fraction of 20 tolas.	1852-3. £ Gross Receipts 234,320 Expenses - 261,044 Loss - - 26,724 1854-5. Gross Receipts 275,967 Expenses - 303,044 Loss - - 27,077
JAMAICA	In 1843 the system of charging letters by weight instead of by the number of enclosures was adopted.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ oz., 4d. for a distance not more than 60 miles; between 60 miles and 100 miles, 6d.; between 100 miles and 200 miles, 8d.; and so on, adding 2d. for every 100 miles. The increase of weight is the same as by the English scale. Newspapers are charged $\frac{1}{4}$ d. each. On pamphlets, up to a weight of 16 oz., the charge is 1d. per oz.	1842 £ Gross Receipts - 18,653 Expenses - - 8,763 Profit - - 9,890 1854 Gross Receipts - 13,008 Expenses - - 11,882 Profit - - 1,126
MAURITIUS	In 1847 District Post Offices were established. Postage stamps have been introduced. Payment in advance is optional; but when letters are not prepaid the postage is doubled.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. - - - 2d. Above $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - - 4d. And 4d. additional for every additional oz. or fractional part of an oz. The postage on letters posted and delivered in the same town is 1d. Newspapers are conveyed free. Books not exceeding 6 oz. are charged 3d., with 1d. additional for every extra oz. or fractional part of an oz.	1847. £ Gross Receipts - 220 Expenses - - 201 Profit - - 19 1854. Gross Receipts - 583 Expenses - - 980 Loss - - 397

APPENDIX (F.)—continued.

Colony.	Nature and Date of Improvements.	Present Rates of Postage.	Gross Receipts, Expenses, and Profit or Loss of the Post Office.
NEW BRUNSWICK.	In 1842 and 1851 measures were successively introduced for the establishment of a low rate of postage. Postage stamps have been introduced.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., about - - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., and not exceeding 1 oz., about 5d. And so on, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. being charged for every additional $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. There is an additional charge of 1d. each on letters delivered at St. John and Fredericton, the only places where letter-carriers are employed. Newspapers are conveyed free. On books, &c., the charge is as follows, prepayment being compulsory:— For a single volume, not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in weight - - - 6d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., and not exceeding 1 lb. - - 1s. Ditto 1 lb., ditto 2 lb. 2s. And so on, according to the English scale of weight.	1844. £ Gross Receipts - 7,840 Expenses - - 5,206 Profit - - 2,634
			1854. Gross Receipts - 8,110 Expenses - - 10,225 Loss - - 2,115
NEWFOUNDLAND.	In 1852 Inland Posts were established. In 1853 a reduced and uniform rate of postage for letters was established, and another for books.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., and not exceeding 1 oz. - 5d. Above 1 oz. ditto 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. And so on in proportion. Newspapers are conveyed free. On books the postage is about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per oz. up to 6 oz.; exceeding that weight, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per oz. up to 16 oz.; beyond which weight they cannot be transmitted through the post.	1852. £ Gross Receipts - 300 Expenses - - 510 Loss - - 310
			1854. Gross Receipts - 362 Expenses - - 724 Loss - - 362
NEW SOUTH WALES.	In 1840, '45, '47, '50, '51, '52, '53, and '54, measures were successively introduced which have effected a reduction of postage, and caused other improvements. Pre-payment by postage stamps is compulsory; but letters insufficiently stamped, if not grossly deficient in postage, are forwarded to their destination; double the deficient postage being charged on them.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - 2d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., and not exceeding 1 oz. - - 4d. Ditto 1 oz. ditto 2 oz. 8d. And so on, according to the English scale of weight Half the above-named rates is charged on letters posted and delivered in Sydney. Newspapers are conveyed free. Books, patterns, samples, maps, &c., are charged 2d. for every 4 oz.	1850. £ Gross Receipts - 13,646 Expenses - - 15,732 Loss - - 2,086
			1854.* Gross Receipts - 24,127 Expenses - - 52,333 Loss - - 28,206

* The increased price of labour and forage after the discovery of the gold fields augmented the expense of the conveyance of mails, &c. Doubtless the same remark applies to the other Australian Colonies.

APPENDIX (F.)—continued.

Colony.	Nature and Date of Improvements.	Present Rates of Postage.	Gross Receipts, Expenses, and Profit or Loss of the Post Office.
NEW ZEALAND.	In 1841 Inland Posts were established A uniform rate of postage has been adopted. Postage stamps have been introduced.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. - - 2d. Above $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - 4d. and so on, 2d. being charged for every additional $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. Newspapers are conveyed free. Books are charged 6d. the $\frac{1}{4}$ lb.	1848. £ Gross Receipts - 1,656 Expenses - - 1,049 Profit - - 607 1854. £ Gross Receipts - 2,209 Expenses - - 2,390 Loss - - 181
NOVA SCOTIA	In 1842, '51, '53, '54 and '56, measures were successively adopted for the establishment of a low rate of postage. Postage stamps have been introduced.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. - about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Above $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - about 5d. Above 1 oz. and not exceeding 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. - about 7d. And so on in proportion, Letters posted and delivered in the same town are charged about $\frac{3}{4}$ d. only per $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. Newspapers are conveyed free. On printed circulars, prices current, hand bills, &c., the postage is about $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per oz. Books, &c., are allowed to pass free of charge when not exceeding 2 oz. in weight; but above that weight and up to 48 oz. (to which weight the book privilege is limited), the postage is about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per oz.	1839. £ Gross Receipts - 5,466 Expenses - - 3,919 Profit - - 1,547 1854. £ Gross Receipts - 5,524 Expenses - - 8,125 Loss - - 2,601
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.	In 1842, '43, and 1851, measures were adopted for establishing low and uniform postage.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. about 2d.; about 2d. additional being charged for every additional $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. Newspapers are conveyed free. On books the postage is about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per oz.	1841. £ Gross Receipts - 300 Expenses - - 684 Loss - - 384 1854. £ Gross Receipts - 943 Expenses - - 2,091 Loss - - 1,148
SERRA LEONE	No internal posts. An attempt was made to establish them in 1841, but it "signally failed from want of correspondents."		

APPENDIX (F.)—continued.

Colony.	Nature and Date of Improvements.	Present Rates of Postage.	Gross Receipts, Expenses, and Profit or Loss of the Post Office.
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.	In 1845 a uniform rate of postage was adopted, except as regards letters between Adelaide and Port Adelaide, and letters posted and delivered in the same town.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - 2d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - - 4d. Above 1 oz. and not exceeding 2 oz. - - 8d. and so on, according to the English scale of weight.	1843. Gross Receipts - £ 892 Expenses - - 848 Profit - - 44
	In 1854 the postage was reduced and made uniform without any exceptions; and a book post was established.	Newspapers are conveyed free. Books are charged 2d. for the first 4 oz., and 1d. for each additional oz.	*1854. Gross Receipts - 7,477 Expenses - - 9,558 Loss - - 2,081
TASMANIA -	In 1855 postage stamps were introduced.		* See note to New South Wales.
	Payment in advance is optional, but when letters are not prepaid the postage is doubled.		
TASMANIA -	In 1841, '42, '44, '45, '47, '51 and '52, measures were successively adopted with the same result as in New South Wales.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - 4d. Exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - - 8d. and so on, 4d. being charged for every additional $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.	1841. Gross Receipts - £ 7,590 Expenses - - 5,723 Profit - - 1,867
	Prepayment is compulsory.	Town letters are charged 1d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.	*1854. Gross Receipts - 8,198 Expenses - - 16,291 Loss - - 8,093
TRINIDAD -	In 1853 postage stamps were introduced.	Newspapers are conveyed free. Books, &c., are charged 6d. for every 4 oz. up to 3 lbs.; beyond which weight they cannot be conveyed through the post.	* See note to New South Wales.
	In 1851 an Inland Post was established.		
TRINIDAD -	A uniform rate of postage has been adopted.	On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - 1d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - - 2d. Above 1 oz. and not exceeding 2 oz. - - 4d. and 2d. for every additional oz. or fraction of an oz.	1852. Gross Receipts - £ 1,962 Expenses - - 2,171 Loss - - 209
	Prepayment by postage stamps is compulsory.	Newspapers are charged 1d. each. On books, &c., the postage is 1d. per oz.	1854. Gross Receipts - 1,533 Expenses - - 1,845 Loss - - 312

APPENDIX (F.)—continued.

Colony.	Nature and Date of Improvements.	Present Rates of Postage.	Gross Receipts, Expenses, and Profits of the Post Office.
VICTORIA.	<p>In 1850 arrangements similar to those in New South Wales (with the exception of a book post) were adopted.</p> <p>Prepayment by postage stamps is compulsory.</p>	<p>On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - 4d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - - 8d. Above 1 oz. and not exceeding 2 oz. 1s. 4d. and so on according to the English scale of weight.</p> <p>Town letters are charged half the above-named rates.</p> <p>Newspapers are charged 1d. each.</p> <p>No provision has been made for the transmission of books by post.</p>	<p>1849. £</p> <p>Gross Receipts - 6,951</p> <p>Expenses - - 7,542</p> <hr/> <p>Loss - - 591</p> <hr/> <p>1854.* £</p> <p>Gross Receipts - 66,949</p> <p>Expenses - 145,866</p> <hr/> <p>Loss - 78,917</p> <hr/> <p>* See note to New South Wales.</p>
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.	<p>In 1852 a reduced rate of postage was established.</p> <p>In 1854 the compulsory prepayment of letters by postage stamps was adopted.</p>	<p>On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. - - 2d. Above $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and not exceeding 1 oz. - 4d. and 3d. for each additional ounce.</p> <p>On letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. posted and delivered in the same town, 1d.</p> <p>Newspapers are conveyed free.</p> <p>Books, &c., are charged 1s. per $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.</p>	<p>1851. £</p> <p>Gross receipts - 427</p> <p>Expenses - - 642</p> <hr/> <p>Loss - - 215</p> <hr/> <p>1854. - £</p> <p>Gross Receipts - 1,436</p> <p>Expenses - 2,053</p> <hr/> <p>Loss - - 617</p> <hr/>

APPENDIX (G.)

AN ACCOUNT showing the GROSS REVENUE, COST of MANAGEMENT, and NET REVENUE of the POST OFFICE of the UNITED KINGDOM, for the last 20 Years.

Year ending	Gross Revenue. ^(a)	Cost of Management. ^(b)	Net Revenue.	Postage charged on Government Departments.
	£	£	£	£
5th January 1838 ^(c)	2,339,737	687,313	1,652,424	38,528
" 1839 ^(d)	2,346,278	686,768	1,659,509	45,156
" 1840 ^(e)	2,390,763	756,999	1,633,764	44,277
" 1841	1,359,466	858,677	500,789	90,761
" 1842	1,499,418	938,168	561,249	113,255
" 1843	1,578,145	977,504	600,641	122,161
" 1844	1,620,867	980,650	640,217	116,503
" 1845	1,705,067	985,110	719,957	109,232
" 1846	1,887,576	1,125,594	761,982	101,190
" 1847	1,963,857	1,138,745	825,112	100,354
" 1848	2,181,016	1,196,520	984,496	121,290
" 1849	2,143,679	1,403,250 ^(f)	740,429	115,902
" 1850	2,165,349	1,324,562	840,787	106,923
" 1851	2,264,684	1,460,785 ^(g)	803,898	109,523
" 1852	2,422,168	1,304,163	1,118,004	167,129 ^(h)
" 1853 ⁽ⁱ⁾	2,434,326	1,343,907	1,090,419	124,977
" 1854	2,574,407	1,400,679	1,173,727	134,112
31st Dec. 1854	2,701,862	1,506,556 ^(j)	1,195,306	185,236 ^(k)
" 1855	2,716,420	1,651,364	1,065,056	173,560
" 1856	2,867,954	1,600,229	1,267,725	154,229

(a) Namely, the Gross Receipts, after deducting the Returns for "Refused Letters," &c.

(b) Including all payments out of the Revenue in its progress to the Exchequer, except advances to the Money Order Office. Of the Sums under the head "Cost of Management," 10,307*l.* per annum is, up to 1855 inclusive, for pensions which have no relation to the service of the Post Office; and last year the sum was not less than 29,310*l.*; but of this amount 19,003*l.* was expended in the purchase of part of the pension settled on the Duke of Schomberg and his heirs.

(c) 1838 was the last complete year before the general reduction of postage.

(d) On 5th December 1839, the maximum inland Postage for a single letter was reduced to 4*d.*

(e) On 10th January 1840 the postage on all inland letters weighing not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. was reduced to a uniform charge of one penny.

(f) This includes a payment of 196,086*l.* for the conveyance of Mails by Railway in previous years.

(g) This includes a payment of 192,975*l.* for the conveyance of Mails by Railway in previous years.

(h) This includes the sum of 31,899*l.* chargeable against the Census Office in the year.

(i) The revenue and expenditure of the North American provinces, amounting for the last complete year to 96,164*l.* and 71,171*l.* respectively, no longer appear in the Accounts of this Department, except that the accounts for 1853 include one quarter's revenue and expenditure for Canada.

(j) This includes a payment of 128,000*l.* for the conveyance of Mails by Railways in previous years.

(k) This includes the official postage charged on the General Post Office and on the East India Company, which was excluded from the Return in former years.

APPENDIX (H.)

AN ACCOUNT of the AMOUNT of POSTAGE, collected at the under-mentioned Towns of the United Kingdom (including Postage Stamps sold by the Post Office and by the Office of Inland Revenue) during the Years 1855 and 1856.

	1855.	1856.
ENGLAND.	£	£
Bath	13,765	14,384
Birmingham	35,695	38,849
Bradford, Yorkshire	11,824	13,136
Bristol	28,510	29,967
Cheltenham	9,691	9,760
Coventry	4,365	4,620
Derby	8,202	8,659
Exeter	10,118	11,915
Hull	16,575	16,960
Leeds	19,525	21,433
Leicester	7,227	7,853
Liverpool	92,842	100,379
London	817,338*	834,927†
Macclesfield	2,015	2,231
Manchester	78,121	85,301
Newcastle-on-Tyne	18,434	19,647
Norwich	11,229	11,870
Nottingham	10,528	11,366
Plymouth	10,197	10,221
Portsmouth	10,858	10,894
Newcastle, Staffordshire, and Potteries	4,507	6,032
Preston	6,786	7,381
Sheffield	14,509	14,782
Southampton	12,228	11,585
Wolverhampton	8,086	8,780
York	9,904	10,096
IRELAND.		
Belfast	10,352	12,122
Cork	10,465	10,868
Drogheda	2,084	2,215
Dublin	48,499	55,103
Limerick	7,364	6,986
Londonderry	4,299	4,365
Waterford	3,039	3,195
SCOTLAND.		
Aberdeen	10,918	11,130
Dundee	8,144	8,883
Edinburgh	41,922	56,270
Glasgow	57,788	63,441
Perth	3,725	4,007
Stirling	3,603	3,830

* Including 159,906*l.* for postage charged to Government Departments.

† Including 142,261*l.* for postage charged to Government Departments.

APPENDIX (I.)

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT for the Year 1856.

SIR, Medical Department,
General Post Office, 6th February 1857.

I HAVE now the honour of presenting my Second Report on the health of the officers of this Department.

NUMBER OF OFFICERS UNDER MEDICAL CHARGE.

By the regulations now in force the various officers may be arranged, as to their relation to the Medical Officer, in three classes, according to their positions and salaries.

Class A. Those whose salaries exceed 150*l.* per annum. The Medical Officer does not extend his care to these gentlemen except during the prevalence of an epidemic, or in case of any sudden illness or accident while at the office.

Class B. Clerks whose salaries do not exceed 150*l.* per annum. These officers are not supplied with the medicines that may be prescribed at the expense of the department.

Class C. All other officers employed and paid by this department, who are attached to the chief or Money Order Office. This includes Inspectors, Sorters, Sub-sorters, Letter Carriers, Stampers, Messengers, Porters, Labourers, and Domestics male and female. All these are prescribed for at the office, or visited at their own houses when too ill to attend at the office. All the necessary medicines and instruments are gratuitously supplied to them.

From various causes the number of officers in what is called the "minor establishment," or class C. is constantly varying. Some of the lately appointed Letter Carriers on presenting themselves for re-examination to the Medical Officer at the expiration of their six months' probation, are found to be unfit for the duties, and are therefore not confirmed. Some who are disabled from attending to their duties by continued illness are temporarily replaced by substitutes; whilst interchanges between the chief and branch offices are constantly taking place. For these reasons many more officers are under medical care in the course of the whole year than are entered on the books as attached to the office at any one time.

Thus on the 31st December there were in

Class A.	-	-	-	-	274
Class B.	-	-	-	-	331
Class C.	-	-	-	-	1,100

making 1,431 in the last two classes; while during the course of the year there have been 1,969 different individuals attached for a longer or shorter period to the two offices, any of whom, if ill, might have applied for official medical aid. As a considerable proportion of the officers constituting the difference between these two numbers have helped to swell the invalid list, classes B. and C. may be stated as averaging 1,500 for the entire year.

CANDIDATES EXAMINED.

During the year 401 candidates have obtained nominations as Clerks, Letter Carriers, &c., and, in accordance with the regulations, have presented themselves to me for medical examination. Of this number 47, or nearly 12 per cent. were rejected, and 354 passed satisfactorily.

Of this latter number 61 or about 16 per cent. were subsequently rejected on other than medical grounds, by the Civil Service Commissioners; making 108 rejections among 401 candidates.

GENERAL HEALTH.

The health of the whole body of officers has been highly satisfactory.

It is most gratifying to me to be able to state that, among the 605 officers in classes A. and B. there is not a single death to report. Most of the illness that has taken place in these classes has been of a slight character. I am inclined to attribute much of this satisfactory condition to the annual monthly holiday given to all these officers, which is mostly passed in the country.

TABULAR STATEMENT of the Number of CLERKS and other OFFICERS who presented themselves for MEDICAL TREATMENT during the year 1856, specifying some of the more common complaints.

Months.	Clerks.	Other Officers.	Total Number of Officers.	Diarrhœa Cases.	Rheumatism.	Sore Throat.	Boils.
January - - - -	9	130	139	10	13	2	3
February - - - -	11	105	116	5	8	—	3
March - - - - -	12	118	130	3	13	3	5
April - - - - -	16	107	123	9	19	2	3
May - - - - -	5	140	145	7	14	12	2
June - - - - -	16	128	144	20	14	14	10
July - - - - -	16	173	189	52	10	6	2
August - - - - -	31	214	245	102	4	4	5
September - - - -	9	149	158	25	6	3	6
October - - - - -	8	97	105	8	7	4	5
November - - - - -	12	119	131	8	10	8	3
December - - - - -	14	132	146	4	10	6	4
Total - - - - -	159	1,612	1,771	253	128	64	51

About 650 visits have been paid to officers at their own houses, when too ill to attend at the office.

It will be seen by the above table, that during the year the large number of 1,771 distinct cases of illness have presented themselves for treatment. The total number of officers having permission to avail themselves of my care being estimated at 1,500, it follows that the cases of illness were rather more than one to each officer. By far the larger number of these cases were of little gravity, as I have always encouraged the men to present themselves for advice on the first symptoms of illness.

In the majority of the cases thus early attended to, the disease has been nipped in the bud, and a lengthened illness with consequent absence from duty prevented. This I believe to be one of the most efficient means for practically carrying out the science of preventive medicine. It is in this way that the officers themselves derive the most important advantage from the liberality of the Government in providing gratuitous medical advice.

Not only are they saved the cost of medical attendance, but much absence from duty, with the consequent loss of a proportion of their salaries, is by this means spared them. They are also saved from the bodily and mental pain that accompanies, and the injury to the constitution which follows a severe and prolonged attack of illness.

In the table I have specified a few of the diseases more commonly met with among the officers, namely, diarrhoea, rheumatism, inflammatory sore-throat, and boils or carbunculoid disease. These are all to a certain degree more or less preventible. They are mostly due to impure air or exposure to draughts, or to sudden and great changes of temperature, or to improper diet or insufficient clothing. Other ailments which I am occasionally called on to prescribe for I have traced to neglect of personal cleanliness.

In accordance with a report that I made on this subject in the course of the summer, the authorities have directed that Letter Carriers shall pay in future more attention to cleanliness.

It will be for the benefit of the men themselves that the regulation alluded to shall be strictly enforced.

EPIDEMICS.

There have been no special epidemics during the year ; but the usual summer diarrhoea has been more than usually prevalent. The table shows that 154 officers suffering from this complaint presented themselves for treatment during the months of July and August alone. But these figures do not represent the actual number attacked, as many more were relieved without personal application to the Medical Officer.

During the summer season 16 different rooms in this building and the Money Order Office were kept constantly supplied with the proper remedies for this complaint, in order that relief might be obtained at any hour of the day or night, immediately on an attack coming on.

Besides the diarrhoea medicine so supplied to the two principal offices, upwards of a hundred gallons were sent to 40 branch and district offices in London and the suburbs, for the use of the officers employed there.

Inflammatory sore-throat has been very prevalent. It is traceable in a large proportion of cases to draughts of cold air entering through open doors, while the men are engaged in sorting or stamping in the larger offices.

Many cases of rheumatism arise from the same cause, one of the most difficult evils to deal with in this large building.

There have been 51 cases of boils, a large number. As I have already stated, I believe this disease to take its origin partly from improper food, and partly from living in an impure atmosphere. I have observed it to be more frequent among the men who live in small close rooms in the interior of the town than in those who inhabit more open dwellings in the suburbs. In my last annual report I alluded to the great advantage that would accrue to the men if they could be provided with more healthy dwellings. I should expect to see a considerable diminution in the last-mentioned disease among the inmates of such improved habitations.

There have been 1,612 cases of sickness among the 1,638 persons composing the minor establishment. Of these cases 716 have been severe enough to incapacitate the invalid for a time from duty.

AVERAGE DURATION OF ILLNESS.

Minor Establishment.

The total amount in days of absence from duty on account of illness in Class C. was 11,934 days. This will give a mean average duration of about $16\frac{1}{2}$ days for each officer who absented himself. But this amount of absence is unduly swollen by the prolonged absence of four officers, three of whom have not been on duty any part of the year.

As none of these will return to the department, and their places have been long filled up by fresh appointments, their absence should be deducted from the gross amount. When this is done, the average duration of each case of illness will be reduced to about 15 days.

But a very large proportion even of this reduced amount of absence is caused by comparatively very few cases. Seven officers have been absent many months consecutively—one for eleven, one for nine, and another for eight months. These seven cases have consumed between them 1,196 days; so that if allowance be made for these cases of prolonged illness, each one of which was above three months' duration, the average absence from duty of the remaining cases amounts to about $13\frac{1}{2}$ days. This number represents correctly the average duration of each case of illness sufficiently severe to necessitate absence from duty. But if the total amount of absence in the minor establishment be divided among all the cases of sickness, it will give an average of about $6\frac{1}{2}$ days' absence for each patient.

Clerks.

One hundred and fifty-nine Clerks have presented themselves for treatment during the year. This number includes a few in Class A. who suffered from the prevailing diarrhoea. The total number of Heads of Departments, Clerks, &c., comprehended in Classes A. and B., who have been off duty from illness, is 254; and the total amount of such absences is 4,939 days, making an average of about $19\frac{1}{2}$ days each.

If 15 of these cases, however, which have each exceeded three months in duration, and have engrossed 2,409 of the whole number of days, be deducted from the gross amount, the mean average duration of each case will be reduced to about $10\frac{1}{2}$ days.

General Body of Officers.

Of the 2,243 officers who have been attached to the Chief and Money Order Offices during some portion of the year, 970 have been at some time absent from duty on account of illness.

The average number of days that any officer was off duty from illness, including in the calculation the whole body of officers, was about $7\frac{1}{2}$ days. But if correction be made for the four exceptional cases first alluded to, the average absence will be exactly 7 days.

DEATHS in the Class of LETTER CARRIERS, &c.

Disease.	Age at Death.				Total.
	Under 30.	Between 30 and 40.	Between 40 and 50.	Between 50 and 60.	
Consumption - - -	2	1	4	1	8
Heart disease - - -	—	1	—	—	1
Inflammation of lungs - - -	1	—	—	—	1
Dropsy - - - - -	—	1	—	—	1
Total - - - - -	3	3	4	1	11

Making the mortality about $7\frac{1}{2}$ per 1,000 ; 70 per cent. of which was caused by consumption.

DEATHS in the Class of CLERKS, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS, &c.

None.

This favourable statement of the mortality of the whole body of officers, is, I believe, partly due to the mildness of the present winter, so far as it has yet gone.

REMOVABLE CAUSES OF DISEASE.

In the previous part of this report allusion has been made to various complaints to which some of the officers, more particularly the Sorters, are unduly subject. Attacks of sore-throat, coughs, colds, and rheumatism are frequently attributed by the patients to draughts in the larger offices. Where men are engaged in sorting letters or newspapers directly in front of a door which is being constantly opened, protection has been afforded by means of wicker screens. But these only protect the individuals most directly exposed.

The passages on the Secretary's side are complained of during the winter season as being extremely cold and draughty. I have recommended a fireplace or stove for warming the air that ascends the passages in question, to be erected at the bottom of the grand staircase.*

* It has been determined to carry Dr. Lewis's recommendation into effect.

Scarcely a week passes without complaints being made to me of the bad effects on the general health or on the eyesight of the Sorters and other officers employed in the larger rooms lighted by gas. I have long been of opinion that the method of lighting these and other large offices is capable of very considerable improvement.

The lights are very numerous, and being only eight feet from the floor, there is no attempt made to carry off the great amount of caloric, or the deleterious gases given off by the act of combustion.

The number of officers employed at one time in some of the rooms makes it extremely desirable that some better system for combining more perfect lighting with good ventilation should be adopted.

In the Inland Office there are employed at one time, on

Morning duty about - - - 467 men.

Evening " - - - 378 "

The number of gas lamps is 155.

In the Newspaper Office there are employed at the same time, on

Morning duty - - - 646 men.

Evening " - - - 287 "

Gas burners, 145.

The rapid vitiation of the atmosphere in these offices when lighted up, may easily be imagined, when it is recollected that each gas burner gives off as much carbonic acid gas as six human beings, besides the sulphurous acid and other impurities.

The temperature in some of the offices during the summer was as high as 86°.

In a special report on the lighting of the larger rooms of this department, that I presented to you in December last, I pointed out, at the request of the First Commissioner of Works, the principles that, in my opinion, should be kept in view in lighting rooms or offices where large numbers of persons are collected together.

They are the following :

1. The sources of light should be as few in number as possible, consistently with the light being sufficiently powerful and equally diffused.

2. The lights should be as elevated as the ceiling will allow.

3. They should be so contrived, that not only can nearly all the heat, as well as the whole products of combustion, be carried off directly without admixture with the lower strata of air, but they should be made subservient to an efficient system of ventilation.

4. And, lastly, I am of opinion that the reflective power of metals or other substances might with economy be more scientifically employed than is now generally done.

If these principles were carried out in lighting the offices of this department, I believe that very great benefit to the health of a large number of the officers would rapidly result.*

* The subject of lighting and ventilation is now under consideration, with a view to a remedy of the evils enumerated by Dr. Lewis.

VENTILATION OF THE BUILDINGS.

About the end of the year 1855, finding that the various rooms in the basement floor were in a very unsatisfactory condition, with regard to ventilation and aeration, I proposed the laying down a series of tubes for carrying off some of the vitiated air given off by the gas-burners, &c. Considerable benefit was derived from this. A great deal of the dust, so much complained of in the bag-rooms, was carried off through the pipes to the flue of the steam-engine, instead of being inhaled by the men.

The walls and ceilings of the bag-rooms and kitchens were no longer blackened, in the course of a few weeks, by the carbon of the imperfectly-burned gas.

This had long been a source of great mischief to the health of the officers, inducing asthma, bronchitis, and other pulmonary affections.

That the officers themselves are sensible of the improvement caused by these measures, is evident, from the following communication.

"SIR, "Circulation Department, 21st June 1856.

"THE Bag-room officers, feeling sensible that a considerable improvement has been effected by the system of ventilation lately introduced in the Bag department, have requested me to convey to you this acknowledgment, and to thank you on their behalf.

"Respectfully assuring you, sir, of the pleasure I feel in rendering this testimony as to the success which has attended your efforts to promote our health and comfort,

"Dr. Waller Lewis,

"I have, &c.

"&c. &c.

"(Signed) WM. WILES."

But although a certain amount of relief has been experienced by this partial ventilation, much more is required to be done before the vaults can be pronounced to be in a healthy condition.

When the present building was erected, the business of the office was not to be compared with what it has since become, particularly since the adoption of the low and uniform system of postage. The basement rooms now used as bag-rooms, kitchens, store-rooms, &c., were not intended for habitation, and were consequently not provided with the requirements and conveniences necessary for health and comfort. Fresh air finds its way with great difficulty to many of the rooms, and to none of these in sufficient quantity.

Vaults, cellars, and subterraneous dwellings, even with the best possible modern appliances, are always more injurious to health than rooms on a level with, or above the surrounding soil, and require more than ordinary care and attention to their due aeration and ventilation.

I have conferred with Mr. Cowper, C.E., on the subject of a more systematic and continuous supply of air to the basement offices, and I agree with him in the belief that the steam-engines at present in use may be advantageously and economically employed for this object.*

* This suggestion by Dr. Lewis and Mr. Cowper is under consideration.

OLD CAVENDISH STREET BRANCH OFFICE.

Some months ago I reported on the very imperfectly ventilated state of this branch. Originally a private dwelling-house with very low rooms, it was but ill adapted to accommodate the large number of officers who work there.

The recommendations I made for the improvement of that office have been promptly carried into effect, to the great satisfaction and benefit of the men.

I am, &c.

WALLER LEWIS, M.B. Cantab.

Rowland Hill, Esq.

F.G.S., F.S.A., &c.

&c. &c. &c.

Medical Officer.

APPENDIX (J.)

HISTORY of the POST OFFICE in IRELAND.

Posts from England to Ireland were first established by Charles I., which we are told were much improved by Cromwell. It was ordered in 1654 that packets should ply weekly between Dublin and Chester, and between Milford and Waterford. These latter, as well as the Dublin packets, did ply at first, but they were soon withdrawn, and were not re-established for 150 years. The postage from London to Dublin was then 6*d*. Cromwell's regulations with regard to the Irish post office were confirmed at the Restoration. In 1662 the line of the packets between Portpatrick and Donaghadee was established, and direct communication between Scotland and the North of Ireland has been maintained without intermission since that date. The service, however, has not always been done in a very complete manner. For some years previous to 1780 the mails were carried in an open boat; and 1*l*. 1*s*. was paid for each trip.

For the next century after this the annals of the Irish post office are very poor. It may, indeed, be doubted whether it had any annals. Could we absolutely learn and describe the very mode in which letters were conveyed on any route—could we portray the sorry beast of burden which carried the bag, the ragged boy who had it in charge, the mountain track which he perambulated, and the slow pace at which he proceeded, no doubt a striking picture might be presented; but unless we have recourse to imagination little interest can be found in the bald postal details of the times of Charles II., William, Anne, George I., and George II. From Watson's almanac of 1756 we learn that the English packets were due in Dublin on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, and that the provincial mails were despatched, some thrice and some twice a week.

But even in the early days of George III. the Irish post office can hardly be said to have flourished. Indeed its state was manifestly so poor, as to make the difference between those days and these the more absolutely wonderful. But though poor in product it was rich enough to afford ample means for the then valued system of civil service jobbing, which the stern morals of the present age so rigorously forbid.

The first report now existing in the letter books of the Irish post office is dated 1774, and it sets forth the future duties and emoluments of certain officers called the Alphabet Keeper, and Joint Alphabet Keeper. It states that a certain Joint Alphabet Keeper had that day resigned, and that another, one William Maturin, was to be appointed in his place, to be Alphabet Keeper in conjunction with the Honourable Ponsonby Moore. The report then goes on to revoke all former orders as to the division of the spoils of office, and makes new provisions. It then orders that the said William Maturin shall execute the entire business of the office, and that the Honourable Ponsonby Moore shall be totally exempted from any attendance on that duty.

It is then further ordered that in consideration thereof the said Honourable Ponsonby Moore shall allow to the said William Maturin the sum of £150 per annum out of the proceeds of his office, and that the said Honourable Ponsonby Moore shall have all the remainder. What was the value of the sinecure it is impossible to learn, for the emoluments arose from payments made by the merchants, and from a privilege of distributing newspapers. The report is signed by Lord Clermont, then Postmaster General, as he was called in Ireland, or Deputy General, as he was more properly called in England.

In the same year a letter was written by Mr. Todd, the Secretary to the General Post Office in England, addressed to Mr. Walcot, the then Secretary in Ireland. This letter communicates to Mr. Walcot the fact that Mr. Barham, the then agent at Dover, had resigned on account of age, and that Mr. Walcot was to be transferred to that place. But it also stipulates that Mr. Barham is still to have and keep till his death, the neat, clear, and full income of the place, whether by salary or perquisites; and that Mr. Walcot, who is thus to become agent at Dover, is still to keep, during Mr. Barham's lifetime, the full income of his employment as Secretary in Dublin, both by salary and perquisites—that he is also to keep an allowance of 83*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* Irish for house rent in Dublin, he being the while packet agent at Dover. It also states that Mr. John Lees is to be appointed Secretary in Dublin; but where he is to look for his salary, it does not state. It may, however, be presumed that Mr. John Lees was not left in ignorance on the point.

The system of requiring persons appointed to situations in the Post Office to pay the pensions of their predecessors seems to have been quite common; and it seems also to have lain with the Postmaster General to award what amount he pleased. We find that one George Skerret was appointed an Assistant Clerk to a road with a salary of 30*l.*, and that he is ordered to pay one Coghill, going out

as superannuated, a pension of 40*l.* This would have been but a sorry appointment, did it not also appear that Skerret was to have two thirds of the net profits arising from the English newspapers supplied to coffee houses.

Thus, when any place became vacant, it seems to have been the practice of the Postmaster General to remodel the incomes of all the men, taking 5*l.* from one here, and giving it to another there; allowing a salary of so much to an Assistant Clerk of a road, on condition that he pay so much out of it to a Deputy Inspector of franks; and ordering that Mr. So and So should be appointed to one situation, with the express understanding that he should accept the salary attached to another.

In 1777 the salaries of the Dublin Post Office were about 4,500*l.*; out of this the Deputy General had 1,000*l.*, the Secretary 400*l.*, the Resident Surveyor 300*l.*, the Accountant 200*l.*, and the Postmaster General's Clerk 112*l.* No other officer drew a salary amounting to 100*l.* per annum; what, however, they all netted by supplying newspapers to coffee houses, &c., the letter book does not tell us. At this time the wages of the Letter Carriers in Dublin ran from 6*s.* to 11*s.* a week.

In 1780, it became known that the Irish office was to be separated from that in London. So the then Secretary, thinking it right to set his house in order before the change, begged permission to have certain arrangements, which were even then thought scandalous, removed from the office books. A certain sum of 80*l.*, was allowed to the Secretary "*as for*" house rent. He alleges that it was a very awkward circumstance that in the face of such an allowance for house rent he was known to be residing in the office apartments allotted to him; and he goes on to explain that he had never received a penny of the 80*l.*, but that it had all gone to a certain Mrs. Blacher, the daughter of his predecessor's predecessor. He then points out the great anomaly of one of his Clerks receiving a sum of 8*l.* per annum "*as for*" a foot post from Strabane to Donegal, the same 8*l.* going wholly and entirely into the Clerk's pocket. How the letters really got themselves carried between these towns is not mentioned. A certain sum of 20*l.* is paid to this same Clerk "*as for*" prints for the Postmaster General. To this, however, the Secretary does not object:

The Lords of the Treasury were pleased to sanction the arrangements proposed for getting rid of these awkward circumstances.

In 1782 there was great commotion in the office. Mr. Lees had resigned his situation as Secretary, and Mr. Armit, his nephew, had been appointed; a brother of Mr. Armit's was also appointed as Junior Clerk. Shortly afterwards the Lord Lieutenant complained to the Secretary-of-State in London that the Secretary of the Irish Post Office had, in conjunction with his brother, opened his Grace's secret correspondence. Whereupon His Majesty ordered that both the Secretary and the Clerk should be dismissed. This order having been given and obeyed, the Deputy General was then sent over by the Postmasters General to inquire into the matter.

The result was that the Lord Lieutenant withdrew his charge, that the Messrs. Armit were acquitted and restored, and that one very strong and pointed circumstance was made to appear—Mr. Armit, junior, who had been represented as being equally culpable with his brother, had never joined the office, and had never been in Ireland.

In 1784 mail coaches were introduced into England, and in the same year the Irish Office as a department *per se* was established. There were two Postmasters-General, with a joint salary of 3,000*l*. Mr. Lees was re-appointed as Secretary, and Mr. Armit became Accountant.

At this date the whole expense of the office, including salaries of provincial Postmasters, and the conveyance of the mails, was 15,000*l*.; out of this 5,500*l*. only was allotted to the provinces, and this sum included the conveyance of the mails through the whole of Ireland, as well as the salaries of the Postmasters. The service then (1784) represented by 5,500*l*., now (1856) costs upwards of 134,000*l*., or more than 24 times as much, and is divided as follows :—

Conveyance of Mails by Railways	-	-	£65,505
Do. by Coaches and Cars	-	-	27,168
Do. by Foot Messengers	-	-	10,334
Salaries and wages paid in Provincial Offices	-		31,122
			<hr/>
			£134,129

Nothing can give a clearer idea of the state of the country at that time (1784), as compared with its existing condition, than a review of the postal accommodation then afforded to the provinces. All mails were conveyed, or supposed to be conveyed, by the Postmasters, to whom was allowed a certain sum for the service. There were no contracts, and, as far as I can learn, no fixed rules as to time. Three miles and a half an hour seems to have been the pace acknowledged to have been sufficient. The bags were usually conveyed by boys. In the immediate neighbourhood of the Metropolis some sort of cart was used, but with this exception the bags were carried either on ponies or mules, or on foot.

In 1788 it was represented to the Lord Lieutenant that robberies were committed on the first stages out of Dublin, the mails being conveyed in open carts, driven by boys from 12 to 15 years of age; and that the mails were thus “an easy prey to the gangs of villains who infest every road leading into Dublin.” Therefore they propose that covered carts shall be built, and “stout resolute men” employed to drive the carts. The question of the covered carts and the stout resolute men was, however, superseded by the mail coach system, which was then on the eve of adoption.

At this time, the bags were carried to Cork, Belfast, Limerick, and Waterford six days a week; and three days a week to Galway, Wexford, Derry, and Enniskillen. There were three posts also to Ennis, which was the only town in the county Clare, except the village of Six-mile-bridge, which had any post at all. There were three in the week to Tralee, and three to Killarney; but for these

last the Government refused to pay anything. The Postmaster had a salary of 3*l.*, but the mail was carried by foot messengers, who were maintained at the cost of the inhabitants, and of the newsprinters in Cork.

Carrick-on-Shannon was the only town in county Leitrim receiving a mail, and this it did twice a week. Now it has two every day. The county of Mayo was penetrated twice a week only, a post-rider going as far as Castlebar, and a foot messenger thence to Newport, and another to Killala. There was no office at Westport, and none at the now flourishing town of Ballina. Except at the county town, there was no Post Office in the whole county of Sligo; and there were but 16 in the province of Connaught, where there are now 171.

The great northern line of posts was called the Dublin and Donaghadee road, on which Belfast was situated. Donaghadee, as the port for Scotland, was a place of considerable importance. It has now fallen into a very sear and yellow leaf; hopes, however, are entertained of its revival.

There were three post towns in county Derry — Derry, Coleraine, and Magherafelt; the two latter of which were served twice a week only. In the county of Donegal also there were three offices—Ballyshannon served three times a week, and Raphoe and Letterkenny, twice. No other trace, however, of a post to the town of Donegal can be found than that of the foot messenger, whose wages of 8*l.*, paid regularly to a clerk in Dublin, the Secretary had mentioned a few years previously as one of the awkward circumstances to be disposed of. Could the full history of that allowance for a foot post through the mountains of county Donegal be obtained, it would be very interesting. The distance was 30 miles; the road, a mountain track. How did the clerk in Dublin obtain recognized permission to pocket that one special allowance of 8*l.* per annum, and leave the town of Donegal steeped in Cimmerian darkness?

In 1790 the mail coach system was introduced into Ireland. It was at first confined to the Cork and Belfast roads, and the two contracts were limited to seven years. In the official report from the Postmaster General, recommending the measure, it was stated that Messrs. Greer and Anderson, of Newry, would run mail coaches through to Belfast for the sum paid for the mail rides. It appears that Mr. Anderson's name was inserted for some purpose now hardly intelligible, as there was no such person concerned in it. The offer, however, was accepted, and Mr. Greer and his son have been employed in the service on the same road from that date up to the present moment. The same report includes a tender for the Cork line also. The mileage allowance for the road to Belfast was 475*l.* for 60 Irish miles; that for the Cork road 1,478*l.*, the distance being 126 miles—thus the whole cost was under 2,000*l.*

In recommending the measure, the Postmaster General pointed out that this sum might be well expended, and with due regard to economy; as any apparent increase of cost would be more than made up by diminution in the solicitors' bills for prosecuting felons in

cases of mail robberies! And in support of this surmise it was urged, that not a single attempt to rob the mails had occurred in England since the establishment there of the mail coaches. The saving, however, and the expected halcyon period of security did not arrive in Ireland. The mail coaches, though occasionally accompanied by four mail guards, were robbed as frequently as the less aspiring riding posts.

The mail coach system gradually spread itself over the main lines of the Irish roads; and it appears that it did so quite as quickly as the roads were ready to receive the coaches. But up to a late date (1829) the practice prevailed of allowing to the Postmaster a sum for carrying the branch mails through the country; a duty which was done in a very slow and slovenly way. The Postmasters were not themselves horse owners, and consequently they let out the service to any one who would do it at the cheapest possible rate, without much regard to the manner in which it was performed. The Surveyors, it appears, had no control over the cross mails, and there was no other check than such as might exist at the head office.

In 1829, and for many years previously, the payment for this work was 5*d.* the double Irish mile. The average is still much the same, being 2*d.* the single English mile, which is within a small fraction equal to 5*d.* the double Irish mile. But though the article is no cheaper, it is much better. The old system of getting the cross mails carried by any animal that the conscience of the local Postmaster thought good enough for such a service does not, however, appear to have been interfered with by the authorities, but to have been gradually amended by the commercial enterprise of a foreigner.

In 1815, Mr. Bianconi first carried His Majesty's mails in Ireland; but he did so for many years without any contract. He commenced in the county Tipperary, between Cionmel and Cahir; and he then made his own bargain with the Postmaster, as he did for many subsequent years. The Postmaster usually retained one moiety of the sum allowed, as his own perquisite, and Mr. Bianconi performed the work for the remainder. What Mr. Bianconi received was thus very small; and he could not and would not therefore run at any hours inconvenient to his passenger traffic, or faster than was convenient to him.

From 1830, when the English and Irish offices were amalgamated under the Duke of Richmond, the public, as Mr. Bianconi says, got something like fair play; and he and others were allowed to carry the mails by direct contract with the Post Office.

From that time till 1848, Mr. Bianconi continued to increase his establishment; and in the latter year he had 1,400 horses, and daily covered 3,800 miles. The opening of railways has, however, so greatly interfered with this traffic, as to expel his cars from all the main lines. But Mr. Bianconi has met the changes of the times in a resolute spirit. He has always been ready at a moment's notice to move his horses, cars, and men to any district, however remote, where any chance of business might show itself; and now, in the winter of 1856-1857, when nearly the whole of that district

in which he was working ten years since has been occupied by railways, he still daily covers 2,250 miles, and is the owner of about 1,000 horses; working in the four provinces, from the town of Wexford in the south-east, to the mountains of Donegal in the north-west.

Mr. Bianconi has done the State good service. By birth he is, as is well known, an Italian, but he is now naturalised, and England, as well as Ireland, should be ready to acknowledge his merits. It may, perhaps, be said that no living man has worked more than he has for the benefit of the sister kingdom.

While on the subject of the conveyance of mails, it may be well to point out that it was reported in 1829 by the Commissioners who had then for many years been inquiring into the Irish post office, that the eight mail coaches then working, and which covered 1,450 miles, cost upwards of 30,000*l.*; whereas the same conveyance over the same distance in England would, according to the evidence of Mr. C. Johnson, the English superintendent of mail coaches, have cost only 7,500*l.*, or about one quarter. This was the more singular, as forage and labour were much cheaper in Ireland than in England; but it was accounted for by the fact that the whole business was in the hands of a very few persons, and that the local innkeepers could not, as in England, be induced to embark in the trade. To that cause may probably be added this other, that at the period in question jobbing was not yet extinct in Ireland. The excess has, however, entirely disappeared; indeed, the work in Ireland is now the cheapest, the cost in England being 2½*d.* a mile, in Scotland 2½*d.*, and in Ireland only 2*d.**

In no part of the United Kingdom has more been done for the welfare of the people by the use of railways for carrying mails and by the penny postage system than in Ireland. What was the state of the service in 1784 has been shown. There were then posts six days a week on only four lines of road; letters to all other places being conveyed only twice or thrice a week. Now there are daily posts to almost every village; and I know of but one important town that has not *two* daily mails both with London and Dublin.

I venture to annex a tabular sketch, showing what has been done for the public in Ireland since 1839; and I think it proves, as regards the Post Office, that the Government has not forgotten its paternal duties.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

* These were the rates in 1855; but in 1856 the average rates were, in England 2½*d.*, in Scotland 3*d.*, and in Ireland 2*d.*

TABLE showing the STATE of the POSTAL SERVICE in IRELAND in 1889 and 1855-6.

1889.		1855-6.	
Number of Post Offices in Ireland -	733	Number of Post Offices in Ireland -	1,373
Paid for conveyance of Letters in Ireland by Mail Coaches (no railway being open at that time, except the short line between Dublin and Kingstown) -	£35,187	Paid for conveyance of Letters in Ireland by Railways and Mail Coaches -	£27,507
Number of Post Office Servants in Ireland:		Number of Post Office Servants in Ireland:	
Dublin 335 } Country 1,135 }	1,470	Dublin 371 } Country 2,190 }	2,561
Number of Money Order transactions -	77,037	Number of Money Order transactions -	992,637
Number of Letters -	9,356,412	Number of Letters -	41,832,834
		The increase in Ireland is about 4½ times. In England it has been 5½.	

Arrivals of Mails. 1889.			Arrivals of Mails. 1855-6.		
Night Mails leaving Dublin at 7 pm.		Delivery about	Night Mails leaving Dublin at 7 pm.		Delivery.
Belfast -	7.0 am.	8.0 am.	Belfast -	3.25 am.	7.0 am.
Cork -	8.0 pm.	3.45 pm.	Cork -	2.15 am.	7.0 am.
Limerick -	8.0 am.	9.0 am.	Limerick -	2.45 am.	7.0 am.
Galway -	11.0 am.	11.45 am.	Galway -	12.40 am.	7.0 am.
Waterford -	7.0 am.	8.0 am.	Waterford -	4.45 am.	7.0 am.
Derry -	12.0 noon	12.45 pm.	Derry -	6.5 am.	7.0 am.

Arrival of Day Mails.			Arrival of Day Mails.		
Belfast -	8.0 pm.		Belfast -	1.40 pm.	2.20 pm.
Cork (following morning) -	8.0 am.	8.45 am.	Cork (same day) -	3.15 pm.	4.0 pm.
Limerick -	none	"	Limerick -	1.45 pm.	2.30 pm.
Galway -	none	"	Galway -	4.25 pm.	4.40 pm.
Waterford -	none	"	Waterford -	1.30 pm.	2.0 pm.
Derry -	none	"	Derry -	6.40 pm.	7.0 pm.

Revenue (gross) -	£255,380	Revenue (gross) -	£208,901
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APPENDIX (K.)

LETTER from the LORD CHANCELLOR respecting the supposed Non-delivery of a Letter.

" SIR,

" 40, Upper Brook Street, 8th May 1856.

" Complaints were made early in last month that a letter
" posted by Mr. Anderson, of Lincoln's Inn, and addressed to me,
" had never reached its destination.

" Mr. Anderson gave the most convincing evidence that it had
" been posted, and I stated with confidence it had never reached
" me.

" You accordingly directed inquiries to be made. I feel it a duty to you, Sir, and to the Post Office authorities, to say that I have just found the missing letter, which has been accidentally buried under a heap of other papers.

" I have only to regret the trouble which my oversight thus caused, and to take the earliest opportunity of absolving all persons except myself of blame in the matter.

" I have, &c.

" The Secretary of the
" Post Office."

(Signed) " CRANWORTH."

APPENDIX (L)

LETTER of THANKS from LONDON LETTER CARRIERS.

" MY LORD DUKE,

" We, the undersigned Sorters and Letter Carriers employed in the General Post Office, most respectfully and gratefully take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging the kindness and liberality of your Grace, which has enabled us to effect, upon such advantageous terms, insurances upon our lives.

" We beg to state that in each case where such insurance has been effected the policy has been received by the party, and we have now the gratification of being enabled to consider ourselves relieved of a large amount of anxiety which hitherto has pressed heavily upon our minds ; and when we reflect upon the great benefit our families must ultimately receive, it is impossible for us to be too grateful for the boon.

" We also most respectfully beg to tender our thanks to the other authorities of this establishment, for the kind assistance they have afforded us in carrying this to completion.

" Your Grace will perceive that all who have effected an insurance have not attached their signature, many of whom, being pensioners, reside at such distances as to render it impossible for them to do so ; but we know all of them to be equally grateful for this act of benevolence.

" In conclusion, my Lord Duke, we beg again to tender our grateful thanks, and to subscribe ourselves,

" Your Grace's most obedient,

" humble Servants,

" To the Most Noble the Duke of Argyll,

&c. &c. &c.

" Her Majesty's Postmaster General, &c."